

T H E
Original Constitution
O F T H E
Christian Church:

W H E R E I N
The **Extremes** on either Hand are
Stated and Examined.

To which is added an
A P P E N D I X,
C O N T A I N I N G
The Rise of the *Jure Divino* Prelatists;
and an Answer to their Arguments, by
Episcopal Divines,

By T. A. Minister of the Gospel at Alyth.

Teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded you, &c. Mat. 28. 19, 20.

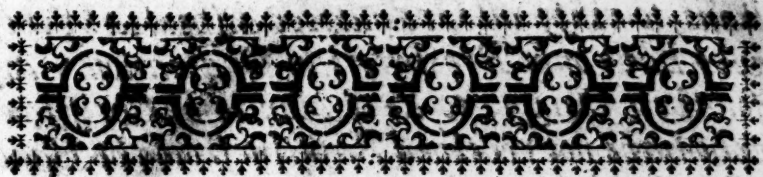
Nam Consuetudo sine veritate, vetustas Erroris est; propter quod, relicto Errore, sequamur Veritatem, &c. *Cypr. ad Pomp.*
Dist. 8. Ca. Consuetudo.

Non habet Charitatem Dei, qui Ecclesiæ non diligit unitatem,
Aug. de Bapt. L. 3.

E D I N B U R G H,

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T H E
P R E F A C E.

ALTHOUGH I cannot say, I was prevailed upon by the Importunity of Friends, when I first began to enquire into the Grounds on which the Jure Divino Episcopalians bottom their Claim, to be the only true Church of the Reformation, and condemn other Protestants differing from them, as so many Sectaries and Schismatics; yet I can safely affirm, I was importun'd by divers Hands to carry on the ensuing Treatise to its present Length.

The impetuous Clamours of such who make the Church a Term of Distinction from all other Protestants, at first induced me to make Enquiry on this Head; that thereby I might see, if these Mens Arguments bore a Proportion to their bold and positive Assertions. And when the following Sheets were perused by several Hands, I was both importun'd and encourag'd to let them appear in Publick.

It is become fashionable with our Episcopalians, to vilify all Ordinances dispensed by those who have only Presbyterian Ordination; and for their Clergy, to deny Men to be Christians, who have not received Baptism from the Hands of such as have derived their Orders, by an uninterrupted Chain of Succession, from the Apostles. And thus, they make good what a learned Prelate charged on the Romish Church, as one of her Principles, That it is always safest to be on the Uncharitable Side.

The Consideration of such a Way of speaking engaged me to examine this extraordinary Miracle, and satisfy my self, whether this was a Maxim universally held by all the learned Men of that Denomination. But, to my great Satisfaction, after I had perused some of their Writings, I found there was a strong and learned Body among them, who espoused Protestant Principles, and, with masterly Judgment and Accuracy, disclaimed such Romantick Pretensions. This Observation influenced me to make a Collection of the Scripture Arguments alledged in Favours of the Hierarchy; and then, to let the Reader see how inconclusive they were, I set down their Answers from many learned Episcopal Doctors, who are more than able for the Jure Divino Prelatists.

On the Perusal of this Collection by some of my Friends, I was importun'd to let it appear in Print; especially when, at that Time, an
Episcopal

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Episcopal Writer was pleased to notify unto the World, that there was a Division among the Presbyterians about the Office of Ruling Elders: And, for this End, he brings the learned and pious Principal Forester, and the worthy Mr. Jamieson on the Stage, as Antipodes. But I cannot help thinking, that this Writer had done as real Service to his Cause, if he had first cleared his own Church of this Imputation, before he had made a Charge upon others. Besides, his Observation is mean and silly, and deserves no Regard, tho' it had been true in the Facts alledged; whereas it is false, if the Author had candidly examined the Scope of these Writers. And because I find, this Author insists on the Insensibleness of the Change that was introduced into the Government of the Church, as an Argument against the Fact, I here refer him to the judicious Mr. Lauder against Chillingworth, Pag. 67. & seqq. where he will see both the Tendency of his Reasoning, and from whom it is borrowed. And indeed, were this Argument good, then another bebov'd to be equally good, namely, because the Servant Men could not account when, or by whom the Tares were sown among the Wheat; therefore, when the Blades sprung up, they were not to believe them to be Tares, but Wheat.

This Collection, tho' it was not published at that Time, is now added by Way of Appendix;

and I submit it to the Consideration of the Candid and Ingenuous, how much Solidity there is in these Men, to taunt the Presbyterians on that Head, or how much Sincerity, if they be acquainted with their own Writers.

The next Step of my Enquiry was, to find out the true Basis on which the Episcopal Scheme is founded, and that Point in which they seem most universally to agree in the Defence of their Model of Church Government; and that is, that There can be but one Bishop in one Church, &c. This is what the more learned Part of the Episcopalians lay down as the true State of the Controversy between them and the Presbyterians. To this I have assented; and for overturning this main Pillar on which their Scheme is founded, I have alledged, that in the Churches planted by the Apostles in several of the Cities of the Roman Empire, there were in each of them more Bishops than One, to whom the Care of the Flock was committed in common.

When I had gone some Length in the following Treatise, it was so ordered, that a Minister or two, with some of their Admirers, began to vent themselves in Favours of Independent Principles. This occasioned me to take some Notice of that Scheme of Government, and treat it as an Extreme on the one Hand, as Episcopacy is on the other.

After

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After I had near finished the greatest Part of the following Sheets, there came abroad in Print, A Defence of Congregational Principles, bearing this Title, An Explication of that Proposition contain'd in Mr. Glass's Answers, &c. This I have examined, in so far as it contains any Thing material, in Opposition to what I had laid down, and disposed my Remarks under the proper Heads, which has increased the Bulk of the after Treatise beyond my Design.

I can safely affirm, that no Prejudice to the Person or Character of that Author, nor Envy to his Merit or Fame, did put me upon answering what he advanceth; but a sincere Desire to contribute my Mite in Defence of the Truth, and to prevent any Mischief that might happen to our present happy Constitution, by leaving any of the Principles on which it is founded, under the Disadvantages of that Person's Misrepresentations. Tho' all he has said, can have no Influence on the Judicious and Thinking, seeing it carries more of the Assertion than Argument in it; yet the more Weak or Unwary may be intangled, and shaken as to their Steadfastness in these Principles so long contended for in this Kingdom.

If the Defence of National Churches had come abroad before I had laid down my Method and Order, and well near finished the following Treatise, I should not have troubled

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the World with many Things that have been said therein to very good Purpose, and yet stand unanswered.

After I had examined these two Extremes from the Sacred Oracles, and said what I judged proper as to the positive Part of our Constitution, I was induc'd to consider the State of Things as they happened in after Ages. In this Part of the following Treatise, I have endeavour'd to let the ordinary Reader see, that Antiquity is most defective in the Time wherein it could have proved most useful to the Church; and, that the pretended Succession of Bishops mention'd in some of the ancient Catalogues, can never be an Argument of the Succession of Jurisdiction and Power over Presbyters. And because the Episcopalians still make a Noise, that if there had been a Change made in the Polity of the Church, from what obtain'd in the Apostolick Age, there would have been some remarkable Opposition made unto it; I have given the best Account I could, of the Way how, and the Time when, this Change appears to have taken its first Beginnings.

*There is one Thing the Reader will perceive on this Head, namely, That I have taken the Liberty to break in upon Chronological Order, in adducing the Testimony of the Ancients after the Change, that thereby I might bring Matters together, and give every one a
stronger*

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stronger View of the Arguments adduced from that Quarter, than what they could have, by bringing in every Testimony separately, according to the Time in which the Fathers lived.

I have made it my Care, to deliver myself in such a Stile, as might not be rude unto the more Polite, nor above the Capacity of the Ordinary Reader. What is chiefly aimed at in the whole of the ensuing Treatise, is, to give the positive Part of what I take to be the Constitution and Polity of Christ's House, in all its essential Branches, as it was first planted by the Apostles. This, if I mistake not, is not so fully to be learned from any of our own Writers on this Subject; partly, because they have for most, written in Answer to others, which oblig'd them to pursue the Method and Order of their Adversaries, and to be more careful to invalidate their Arguments, than to give the positive Part of their own Principles; and partly, because they have prosecute the Points in Debate by Halves, and taken in the Cause, as it relates to the Episcopalians or Independents, separately; whereas they are both considered in the following Treatise, which brings all the Essential Branches of our Constitution on the Field.

I shall not make any Excuse for using the Authority of others on many Occasions; this was, not to shew Reading, nor affect Pedantry, which I abhor as much as any other; but

to confirm my own Sentiments by the Use of other Men, which is necessary in a Dispute of this Nature; the Passages from the Ancients, which I have adduced, were some Time in Collecting, by Reason of my Distance from a Publick Library: And, for the same Reason, I have called in some Help from the learned Blondel, our own Calderwood, Dr. Stillingfleet, and Dr. Barrow, and have referred to these, in the Passages I have taken from them, when I could not come at the Originals themselves. And here I judge it proper to let the Reader know, that because I had not an Original Copy of Eusebius, I have made Use of the Latin Version printed at Basil 1611. And that none might be at a Loss to know, whether the Translations I have made of the Ancients are just, I have, for most Part, set down the Originals on the Foot of the Page, that the Learned Reader may see I have done them all Justice.

I cannot help thinking, that it would be ill Nature, if any severe Censure should pass on the ensuing Performance; unless it manifestly appear, that there is a vast Disproportion between the Design and the Abilities of the Author, or a palpable Defect of Method and Order in the Execution. That there are Defects and Escapes in it, I make no Question; and shall rejoyce to see them under Correction. But if any shall take a Liberty to make Faults where

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where there are none, and, without allowing themselves to peruse impartially what I have said, shall despise it, the Author will satisfy himself with the Old Maxim,

*Hi præ cæteris solent aliena liberius carpere,
qui nihil proprium ediderunt.*

But if what is written be found tolerable by Men of Learning and Judgment, and in any good Measure useful to those who have neither Time nor Occasion to read many Books, the Aim of the Author is obtained. He is easy either for the Applause or Dispraise of such who are Smatterers in Criticism, who make it their Business to fish for Faults, depreciate and vilify every Thing that is not the Fruit of their own Invention, or in all Points measured to their Apprehension of Things. This much I know, that such Criticism is look'd upon by the truly sober and learned Part of Mankind, to be as far different from nice Judgment, as Sophistry is from solid and genuine Philosophy.

I know, that such who place a great deal of their Religion in sweetness of Temper, and misconstrued Notions of Charity, will reckon a Dispute on this Subject of no Consideration, and be ready to think, that every one may satisfy himself with that Constitution which has the Countenance of the State, without troubling

bling his Mind about its Original, or Jus Divinum. But I perswade my self, that every sincere Lover of the Truth will put a greater Esteem on the positive Institution of Christ, so clearly revealed as to all the Essential Branches of the Polity of his House, than to allow himself in such Libertine Notions concerning a Mean, which Heaven hath so much countenanced for preserving and maintaining Purity of Doctrine and Ordinances in this Church: Whereas in a neighbouring Nation where the Exercise of this is wanting, we may see what Monsters the Age has produced.

I am very far from believing, that the Civil Authority's being interponed in Defence of that Church Constitution which is of Christ, does in the least alter the Nature of a Divine Establishment, or invalidate its Authority. It has been the Happiness of this Church, since the Glorious Revolution, to be under the Protection of the State; however much she was oppressed in former Reigns, when Tyranny, arbitrary and unlimited Power were the chief Topicks of Sermons, and reduce them to Obedience, was a Term of Art with Clergymen, to express the sending forth of Dragoons to destroy the Presbyterians.

But as the Case is now happily changed; so that Church which has the least Affectation of outward Shew, Riches, Powers, Dignities, Magnificency and Pomp, and looks upon

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pon its Essence to consist in Piety, Simplicity, Humility, and a Conformity to the Doctrine, the Faith and Manners of the first Christians, will still bear the nearest resemblance to Christ's Kingdom, study the Interest of lawful Government in the State, and Influence every one to act the Part of good Subjects. But the contrary Disposition soon began to discover it self in the Church, and gradually advanced, till the Bishop of Rome, under the Name of Pope, seated himself on the imperial Throne, and took upon him to dispose of all Crowns and Kingdoms at his Pleasure. By this the Kingdom of Christ was made to be of this World; and every advance the Mystery of Iniquity made, had its Tendency this Way, as will appear from the latter Part of the 4th Chap. of the ensuing Treatise. And because I have endeavoured Brevity on that Head, the Reader who inclines to be more fully satisfied, as to the Increase and Tendency of Lordly Dominion in the Church, may consult Dr. Cave's Primitive Christianity, Chap. 8. and Salmasius De Primatu Papæ, Chap. 12. Page 331.

Not to enlarge this Preface, there is one Thing more I would acquaint the Reader with, namely, That I have not troubled my self with the Popular Election of Ministers: The Reason plainly is, That that Point is now main-

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maintained to our Hands, by some of those of the Episcopal Perswasion among us.

Nor have I taken any Notice of the Postscript which is added to the Explication of Mr. Glas's Proposition, in Answer of a Letter to the Author. At first I imagined that it might have been a Letter from a Man to his own self, which we meet with in the Foppery of some Farces; but after some Enquiry, I am much mistaken if it be not one written by Dean Sherlock, (instead of a Presbyterian) before ever our Author was Born.

I perswade my self, that every one who has read this Performance will, at first View, perceive, that I have kept more Temper in my Remarks upon it than was really due, considering how full it is of Invectives against the Presbyterians. And indeed I must own, that when one is provoked between two such miserable Comforters, the Author of the Explication on the one Hand, and the Episcopalians on the other, it is not easy to maintain Decency of Language. Nor is it easy for any sober Man, who desires to exercise Charity and calmness of Reasoning, to have to do with so much Fire and Invective, without being touched with two very different Passions, Tenderness and Indignation.

If it shall fall out, that any of these, who espouse the different sides of the Question, between which the Presbyterians stand, shall
make

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make a Reply to what I have said, I shall patiently bear them; but must beg this one Thing, that they may do it in a fair and clear Way of Reasoning, and make the Sacred Oracles the Rule and Measure of their Advances: And I promise them I shall never reject the Ancients as an under Proof, tho' their Assertions without Scripture Warrant, or Practices that have no precedent in the Word of God, will never be a prevailing Argument with me, nor any true Protestant, who looks for every Thing necessary to be believed and practised in their Bible, Gal. i. 8.

I know our Independent Brethren, are as much for the Scripture Rule as we, and had it not been for the Reasons formerly mentioned, I should have left that Part of the ensuing Treatise to Persons of greater Genius and Leisure.

I own I'm but an obscure Country Minister, and my constant Imployment in the Charge committed to me, leaves me but little Time to attend on Polemical Disputes. Besides, these are the Province of Persons of greater Abilities and Opportunities than I have, or can expect to arrive unto. However, being Conscious of the Truth and Sincerity of the Design, I'm no further solicitous about the Fortune of the following Performance, than that it give Satisfaction to the sincere Well-wishers

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wishers of our Constitution; and as for the Threats of an Answer, before the Work appeared in Publick, it does not in the least affect me, I have adduced Men of Leisure, Abilities and Integrity on my side of the Question, which are able to Counterbalance all our Prelatists can adduce.

In a Word, when the Patrons of the Divine Right of Prelatical Government, shall be pleased to make an Answer, and attempt its Reconciliation, either with the Revelation of God, or with the famed Authors of their own Church, or their Schemes one with another; what they advance may come to be examined.



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What further Errata may cast up, and have escaped in the Revising, they are submitted to the Mercy and Candor of the Reader.

T H E



T H E
Original Constitution
O F T H E
C H R I S T I A N C H U R C H.

I N T R O D U C T I O N,

Shewing that the Holy Scripture, and not Human Tradition, is the Rule by which we are to judge of the Constitution of the Gospel Church: And giving an Account of the chief Heads of the following Treatise.



HERE has not happened any Thing of more fatal Consequence to true Religion, the Unity and Uniformity of Christs Kingdom, than the little Regard that has been paid to Divine Revelation, or the Canon of the New Testament. The not submitting to this, and making it the only

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ly Rule, by which all Things belonging to Christ's House were to be determined, was that, which opened a Door for all the intolerable Extravagancies and vain Deceits of the *Romish* Church : And had they not been too much followed by some who profess themselves Protestants, Differences in the Matters of Religion, and particularly about the Oeconomy of the Gospel Church, had not so long subsisted, so as to be the Controversy of the Day. 'Tis indeed true, the most, if not all of our Episcopalians, grant, That the Scriptures contain all Things necessary to be believed in order to Salvation ; That in them is to be read every Article of Faith expressly, or by necessary Consequence : Yet how many of these are there, who will not allow the Sacred Oracles, as a perfect Rule of Manners, and containing all Things needful to make up the compleat Constitution of the Redeemer's House. When they cannot have such a Model of Church Government, as most suits their own Inclinations, warranted from the Divine Records, their Refuge is in the Writings and Practices of the Church, in those Ages that came next after the Apostles. But how disparaging is this to the Wisdom of the Redeemer, and the Revelation of his Will in the New Testament ? Tho' God was pleased to continue with the Seed of *Abraham* a Succession of Prophets, and a Manifestation of his Will in the Cloud of Glory, together with the frequent Answers given unto the People by *Urim* and *Thummim* ; yet, to leave nothing to the Will of Man, or humane Inventions, he not only wrote the Ten Commandments, by his immediate Power and Finger, on two Tables of Stone, but gave Appointment to *Moses* to write the *Law*, all the *Statutes*, *Ordinances* and *Institutions* of Worship, and thereafter, what-
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ever belonged to his House, and Service of the Temple, as to all its Office-bearers, Method of judicial Procedure, and whatever belonged to that State of Things. Now, if God was pleased, and in Infinite Wisdom saw it meet, to secure his Will, and every Pin of his Church-establishment, and Branch of Worship, to the *Jews*, by a special Revelation, and not leave them to be guided by Traditions, in these Matters in which his Glory was so nearly concerned, or to make up their Constitution according to the Phantasms of Men; is it not equally necessary and reasonable to believe, he hath as strictly circumscrib'd the New Testament Church, by that Revelation made in the Fulness of Time by Christ and his Apostles? The *Jews* were confined to one Kingdom, and that of a very small Compass; and yet were bound up by the Divine Law, as to every Branch of their Constitution: And shall we imagine, that the Christian Church, which was diffused to the remotest Regions, and such Places of the World as were block'd up from any free and frequent Communication, was left with an imperfect Revelation, and its Head was not so mindful of her, as to give her a compleat Rule, containing all Things necessary to be believed, known and practised, in order to make up an acceptable Service to himself, and an exact standing Order in his House? To suppose this, says in the strongest Terms, That the Great Head of the Church was *more* careful to give an unerring Rule, and make up an exact Pattern to the *Jews*, and thereby leave no Room for the Inventions of Men, to add or to alter what was written, *than* he was of the Gospel Church, built, in the Fulness of Time, on the Resurrection of Christ, and to be continued to the End of the World, under the Fence of the

Divine Promise. Thus the Revelation of the Old Testament, according to this Way of thinking, was more full, circumstantiate and compleat, than that of the New : And so it must necessarily follow, that even those who observe all Things Christ hath commanded, and thereon enjoy his Presence and Protection, according to his Promise, are yet wanting as to some Things necessary to Salvation, and have not his infallible Testimony to make them wise unto eternal Life. And so *Timothy's knowing the Holy Scriptures from a Child, was not able to make him wise unto Salvation, through the Faith which is in Christ Jesus* : Nor were the inspired Oracles able to make the Man of God perfect, and thoroughly furnished unto all good Works, 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16. Nay, what is equally contradictory to the Letter of the Divine Oracles, the Design of writing the New Testament was not accomplished, namely, (a) *That we might know the Certainty of those Things wherein Man ought to be instructed*; and that we might have Fellowship with the Son of God, so as to make our Joy full (b). Nor can the Church of the Redeemer, the House of God, have its Foundation solely on the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the Chief Corner Stone. For, if there were any Practice, or any Branch essential to the New Testament Constitution, that was not to be found in the Canonical Books; then, in so far it was not bottomed on the Apostles and Prophets, and the Chief Corner Stone, but on a fallible Foundation, and so was not inviolably secured against the Gates of Hell, or equally authorized with the Old Testament Church, which had the Sovereign Will of God for every Pin of its Constitution. Thus the Bereans, whom the Apostle so highly characteriz'd,

(a) Luke 1. 4. (b) 1 John 1. 4.

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riz'd, are not imitable by us, in their examining the Scriptures, and comparing the Doctrines preached unto them with these, seeing all Things necessary to Salvation are not contained therein, or to be found in the Canonical Books. For Example, where shall the diligent Searcher learn, and in what Chapter of his Bible shall he come to the Knowledge of this, namely, the uninterrupted Line and Succession of Bishops, from the Days of the Apostles to the present Time; which, with other Things, according to a certain Sort of Gentlemen in our Day, are so necessary to Salvation, that none can be members of Christ's Church, without they receive the Dispensation of Ordinances from these that are in this uninterrupted Chain. For all these who are not in this Chain of Succession, have no Title to dispense Word and Sacraments; and such as receive them at their Hands, are not profited by them, or Members of the Catholick Church. After all, 'tis desired that the Authors of such Principles may vouchsafe us one Instance from the Writings of the *Apostles*, where there is the smallest Hint of their having left any Thing with the Church, concerning the Constitution of Christ's House, to be set up and put in Practice by those that came after them, which they themselves committed not unto Writing. And till they do this, we may with Confidence say, That our Lord's Words against the *Pharisee's* are still a noble Antidote against Novelties and Innovations in the Church, *Matth. 19. 8. From the Beginning it was not so*: And that there can be no better Preservative against Seducers and Traditions of Men, than to follow the Apostle's Prescription, and earnestly contend for the *Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*, Jude 1, 3, 4.

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'Tis easy to observe what Part some, who profess themselves Protestants, act, and with whom they take Part in their Writings, or rather copy after. Such is their distempered Zeal for Pomp and external Magnificence in the Church of Christ, that they not only make the *Romish Antichrist* their Pattern herein, but take Part with the *Jews* of old, who, by their Traditions, made the Law of God of none Effect. The *Jews* owned, professed and taught the Law of *Moses*; yet, in Effect, they laid greater Stress on their own extravagant Fancies and Traditions, than they did on the Divine Records. It was their common Proverb, that *the Words of the Scribes*, that is, of their Traditionary Divines, were more lovely than the Words of the Law. And so, whenever the Law and their Traditions could not stand together, but clash'd, their Practice was, to interpret the Law by their Traditions, and not the Traditions by the Law. This is plain from the Words of our Lord, *Matth. 15. 3. Why do ye transgress the Commandment of God by your Traditions? for God commanded, saying, Honour thy Father and thy Mother; and he that curses Father or Mother, let him die the Death. But ye say, whosoever shall say to his Father or Mother, it is Corban, it is a Gift, I have dedicate it to the Temple, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his Father or his Mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the Commandment of God of none Effect by your Tradition.* Now, if this was the Practice of the *Jews*, and condemned by our Lord, who can imagine, but such as act the same Part with the Writings of the New Testament, (make their Meaning according to Tradition, and fix their Sense by the after Writings of the Fathers, many of whom were grossly erroneous) shall come under the same Condemnation:

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nation: For the Honour and Glory of the Redeemer is no less concerned in maintaining the Purity of his Word under the New Testament, than it was under the Old, where the *Jews* were concerned, and against whom he said, That they *worshipped God in vain, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, Matth. 15. 9. The Displeasure he hath for such Dishonours, and the Regard for his own Word, cannot miss to appear even from this, that in all his Disputings with the obstinate *Jews*, he did not justify his Doctrine from their Traditions, but the Canonical Writings, the Infallible Word of God: And in this he was imitated by his Apostles, in all their Reasonings in the Synagogues. And that all future Ages should follow his and their Example herein, is expressly declared by the Apostle; *Colos. 2. 8, 9. Beware lest any Man spoil you through Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Traditions of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ*. Now, if the inspired Apostle warns us to beware of the *Traditions of Men*, and *Rudiments of the World*, which once had the Stamp of Divine Authority, the Consequence must be undeniably strong, that such Ceremonies as never were authorised by God, and these Traditions and Inventions of Men that had no being in the Church of Christ, till the Scripture Canon was filled up, and some Time after, ought to be guarded against and rejected. And this is evident to a Demonstration, from the many Reasons and Arguments the Apostle subjoins in the after Part of the *Chapter*, and particularly in the immediately following Verse, *For in him dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily*. "The Argument, says Bishop *Davenant*, is taken from the Perfection that is in "Christ, and by Consequence, which is in his

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“ Doctrine : And it lies in this, Additions are
 “ sought after to make up some Defect or Imper-
 “ fection ; But he in whom all the Fulness of the
 “ Godhead dwelleth bodily, is not an imperfect
 “ Mediator, Saviour or Doctor of the Church :
 “ Therefore we ought not to take upon us to add
 “ to Christ or his Doctrine.” In a Word, to ima-
 gine that there is the smallest Branch to be added
 to the Constitution of the Church of Christ, and
 the essential Maxims of its Government, not to be
 found in the Revelation he has made unto us by his
 Apostles, plainly argues an Imperfection therein,
 and is a Reflection on him, as if the adorable Per-
 fections of the Divine Nature were not in him bo-
 dily : Unless they who hold such Positions, shall
 make it good, That the immediate Age or Ages
 after the Apostles, were infallibly inspired by the
 Holy Ghost, and had a Power of planting Churches.
 But so far is this from being a Truth, no less an
 Episcopalian than *Chillingworth* (a), makes the fol-
 lowing free Confession, namely, “ For my Part,
 “ saith he, after a long (and as I verily believe
 “ and hope) impartial Search of the true Way to
 “ eternal Life, I do profess sincerely, that I can-
 “ not find any Rest for the Sole of my Feet, but
 “ on this Rock, viz. The Scripture. I see plainly
 “ with mine own Eyes, Councils against Councils;
 “ some Fathers against themselves ; a Consent of
 “ Fathers in one Age, against the Consent of Fa-
 “ thers in another Age ; and the Church in one
 “ Age, against the Church in another Age.” Re-
 markable to the same Purpose, are the Words of
 Dr. *Stillingsfleet* (b), and Mr. *Hales*, quoted by him,
 namely, “ For my Part, I see not how any Man
 “ that

(a) Religion of Protestants, Chap. 6. Sect. 36. (b) *Irenicon*, Pag. 318, &c.

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“ that would see Reason for what he doth, can ad-
 “ here to the Church for an unquestionable Tra-
 “ dition received from the Apostles; when, in the
 “ Cause of keeping *Easter*, whether with the *Jews*,
 “ on the Fourteenth Moon, or only on the Lord’s
 “ Day, there was so much unreasonable Heat
 “ shew’d on both Sides, and such Confidence, that
 “ on either Side their Tradition was Apostolical,—
 “ They had, herein, all the Advantages imagina-
 “ ble, in order to know the Certainty of the Thing
 “ then in Question among them; as their Near-
 “ ness to Apostolical Times, being but one Re-
 “ move from them: Yea, the Persons contending,
 “ plead personal Acquaintance with some of the
 “ Apostles. ——— The Observation, saith he, of
 “ this strange Combustion in the Primitive Church,
 “ upon the Account of so vain, frivolous, unneces-
 “ sary a Thing as this was, drew this Note from a
 “ learned and judicious Man, formerly quoted,
 “ in his Tract on Schism, *By this we may plainly*
 “ *see the Danger of Appeal to Tradition or Antiquity,*
 “ *for Resolution in the controverted Points of Faith.*
 “ *O how small Relief we are to expect from thence!*
 “ *For, if the Discretion of the chiefest Guides and*
 “ *Doctors of the Church dia, in a Point so trivial,*
 “ *so inconsiderable, so mainly fail them, as not to see*
 “ *the Truth in a Subject, wherein it is the greater*
 “ *Marvel they could avoid the Sight of it, can we,*
 “ *without the Imputation of great Grossness and Folly,*
 “ *think so poor spirited Persons competent Judges of*
 “ *the Question now on Foot?*” Now, after the Doc-
 tor has told us, that this Author, Mr. *Hales*, was as
 able to make the best Improvement of the Fathers,
 and inferior to none in his Skill therein, he adds
 that which is the main Scope of this Introduction,
 namely.

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namely, "If we must stand to the Judgment of the Fathers, let us stand to it in this, that no *Tradition* is any further to be embraced, than as it is founded on the Word of God." Here is the Testimony of Three Witnesses, in Favours of the Scripture Rule, which is more to be regarded than the Writings of some furious Bigots at this Time. But to return; 'Tis owned, Things purely circumstantial, and that do not affect the Essence and Nature of the Constitution of Christ's House, are left to the Judgment and Discretion of the Rulers which he gave unto it by a Deed of Gift; and it is not easy to be conceived, how, possibly, it could be otherwise, unless the Scriptures had been enlarged to an unsupportable Bulk: And therefore, what we design in the following Sheets, is, *First*, To make it appear, That the Church of Christ was not founded till after his Resurrection; That the Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists, had, all of them, an extraordinary Character, which ceased with themselves; and therefore could not have Successors as such.

Secondly, To give an Account of the different Notions of the Word *Church*, and the Qualifications of its visible Members; and shew, That the Power of the Keys was delivered by Christ to the Office-bearers of the Church, and not unto the Body of the People; That there were a Plurality of Congregations in the single Churches planted in any remarkable City by the Apostles; and, That a Subordination of Ecclesiastical Judicatories hath its Rise from the original Genius of sacred Government, and the Unity of the visible Body of Christ.

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, We shall fix the precise State of the Question between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians, as to the Order of Officers that were to be continued in the Church of Christ till the End of Time; and make it appear from the Constitution of the particular Churches planted by the Apostles, in several of the remarkable Cities within the Bounds of the *Roman* Empire, That there were more Bishops than one in one single Church; and in doing of this, we shall have Occasion to make a further Enquiry into the Independent Scheme of Government.

Fourthly, That which is next to be considered, is, That Antiquity is most defective in the Time wherein it could have proven most useful; and that the Succession of Bishops mentioned in some of the ancient Catalogues, is no Argument of a Succession of Apostolical Power, pretended to by the Episcopalians. To this shall be added a rational Account of the Way how, and the Time when, the Change of Government was introduced into the Church: And thereafter, several Considerations for the clearing of this Head; and by which it will appear, That by the same Methods by which one Presbyter was raised above his Fellows, one Bishop, in a remarkable City, was set over the rural Bishops in smaller Villages; these again made subject to their Metropolitans, and these to their Primates, till at last, the supreme Honour was bestowed on the Bishop of *Rome*; where, in the Event, the Mystery of Iniquity center'd.

Fifthly, The Conclusion of all is, to give some Account of the different Way of the Exercise of the

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the Key of Doctrine, from that of Discipline :
And then lay down the true Foundation of Parochial Sessions ; with a short Hint of the Members that constitute these.

To the whole is subjoin'd an *APPENDIX*, containing the opposite and contradictory Sentiments of the Episcopalians on the Head of Church Government.





CHAP. I.

The Christian Church not founded till after Christ's Resurrection. The Character of the Apostles, as such, not succeeded to by ordinary Officers, which were to be continued in the Church. The Prophets had an extraordinary Character, which ceased with themselves; as also the Evangelists. All these had a double Character, and were succeeded unto by Pastors and Teachers, only in what was necessary to be continued, for perfecting and building up the Body of Christ.

SECT. I.

The Government of the Christian Church not founded till after Christ's Resurrection. Hence the Twelve and the Seventy Disciples had equal Powers in their temporary Mission; and the Priesthood, which was typical under the Old Testament, hath no Place in the New, but in Christ himself, the Antitype.

THAT we may the more clearly and distinctly proceed in this Enquiry, with respect unto the Episcopalians, it must be observed, that, properly, the Christian Church was founded on the Resurrection of Christ, and had not a formal Being, distinct from the Jews, till that Time. During the Time our Redeemer was here on Earth, and went about discharging those
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Parts of his Mediatorial Work, which requir'd his bodily Presence with Men, these who believed on him, were not immediately brought under any distinct Government from that of the *Jews*, but were still incorporate with that Church, and subject to its several ritual Ordinances and Institutions. And indeed it could not be otherwise, seeing our Lord not only requir'd his Followers to subject themselves to the then present Establishment, but behaved himself as a Member of that Church, and Subject of that Republick, in so far as he became obedient to the Ceremonial and Political Laws of that Kingdom. The former had, as yet, a binding Force by the Divine Command; and, in consequence thereof, he was circumcised, received the Passover, observed their Feasts, attended the Service and Worship of the Temple, and, on all Occasions, he, together with his Disciples, shewed himself to pay the greatest Regard to that Constitution. Now, if Christ, in the Days of his Flesh, behaved himself as a Subject of the *Jewish* Polity, and Member of their Church, and established no distinct Model of Government, whereby he and his Followers were erected into a separate Body, independent on the *Hebrews*; then it is not conceivable he had then set up the Model or Scheme of the New Testament Church. Besides, the Time of the Abolition of the *Jewish* Worship, the typical Priesthood, with the Temple upon which it depended, was not till the Death of Christ, *Colos.* 2. 14. *Ephes.* 2. 15. By this it was he abolished the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances, and put an End to all the Orders of the Aaronical Priesthood, and the typical Worship performed at the Temple. And as these were done away in his Death; so his Resurrection from the Dead, triumphant

phant Ascension, and the plentiful Effusion of the Spirit thereon, was a publick Declaration of Heaven having relaxed all Obligation to the *Jewish* Worship, and Aaronical Priesthood. Now was the Time come, in which the true Worshippers of the Father were no more confin'd to *Jerusalem*; and that *Kingdom*, which Christ commanded his Disciples to preach *was at Hand*, was now to appear visibly in the World, as a distinct Body, and under peculiar Regulations, agreeable to the Nature of his Kingdom; vastly differing from that Dispensation and Church Oeconomy, which, hitherto, had obtain'd by divine Appointment, and by which the *Jews* were privileg'd beyond the rest of Mankind. In a Word, as the Old Testament Oeconomy was never depriv'd of its Obligation, nor what was intended by it, made good, till the Redeemer shed forth his Blood on the Cross; so, his Resurrection from the Dead, being a publick Declaration and Seal of God's having relax'd all from being further subject unto it, I look upon this to be the true *Epocha* from whence the Plan and Model of the New Testament Church is to be dated, and had its first Beginnings. And in this I'm seconded by Mr. Sage, that great Champion for Episcopacy, who says, *That the Christian Church was not, could not be founded, till our Lord was risen, seeing it was to be founded on his Resurrection.* From what has been said, 'tis easy to observe,

First, That there is no Argument can be drawn for Episcopal Government, from the Actings of the Twelve Apostles, and Seventy Disciples, during the Days of our Lord's Personal Ministry, and while their Message was only, *The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand.* For, if there was no particular and distinct Government institute by Christ, by which

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which his Followers were made a distinct Body, and separate Society from the Church of the *Jews*, till after his Resurrection; this must be a Truth unquestionable, and beyond Exception. And besides, he that impartially compares the Commission of the *Twelve*, and *Seventy*, which was given them at first, will find, That they were, in all Points, equal as to Power; and nothing in the *Twelve*, to raise them in a paramount Power above the *Seventy*. The Twelve were immediately sent forth, *Matth.* 10. 5, 6. so were the *Seventy*, *Luke* 10. 1. and so, in this temporary Mission, both were Apostles. The Twelve were sent forth two by two, *Mark* 6. 7. so were the *Seventy*, *Luke* 10. 1.

The Twelve were only impowered to preach unto the *lost Sheep of the House of Israel*, and were prohibited to go unto the Cities of the *Samaritans*, *Matth.* 10. 5, 6. but the *Seventy* were not thus restricted, *Luke* 10. 1. they were to go before their Master's Face, into every City and Place where he himself would come, which was even to the *Samaritans*.

The Twelve were sent forth in the most hazardous Circumstances, as Sheep in the Midst of Wolves, *Matth.* 10. 16. so were the *Seventy*, *Luke* 10. 3.

The Twelve had their Commission to preach, *The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand*, *Matth.* 10. 7. so had the *Seventy*, *Luke* 10. 9. And indeed every Circumstance of their Mission exactly agree, as will appear, by comparing *Matth.* 10. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. with *Luke* 10. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

The Twelve had a Power to *heal the Sick, cleanse Lepers, raise the Dead, cast out Devils*, *Mat.* 10. 8. The *Seventy* were commanded to *heal the Sick*; the Devils were subject to them in their Master's Name,

Name, and to them it was given to tread upon Serpents and Scorpions, and over all the Power of the Enemy, Luke 10. 9, 17, 19. And tho' some imagine, that the Twelve were superior to the Seventy, in that to the first was committed the Power of raising the Dead, and cleansing the Lepers, which was not to the latter; yet, granting this is not exprest in their Commission, it may, notwithstanding, be included, as well as casting out of Devils, Verse 17. for this is not mentioned therein. And besides, it doth not appear, that ever any of the Twelve raised the Dead, during the Time of their temporary Mission, and till after our Lord's Resurrection: And what is more, this particular Power is not to be seen in almost as many of the Original Manuscripts, as those wherein it is exprest. But after all, tho' the Twelve had a Power to raise the Dead, and cleanse the Lepers, which the Seventy had not, would this constitute them a superior Order of Officers, of it self? No. John Baptist, as one observes, wrought no Miracles, and yet, no mere Man that ever was born of a Woman, was greater than he. And from what has been said, both the Seventy and Twelve were immediately sent by Christ, which ruins the pretended Subordination.

Again, the Twelve were sent forth in their Master's Name, and clothed with his Authority, *Matth.* 10. 40. so were the Seventy, *Luke* 10. 16. and both had the same Encouragement. Compare *Matth.* 10. 10. with *Luke* 10. 7.

In a Word, the Twelve were sent forth with the most amazing Threatnings against the disobedient, *Matth.* 10. 15. so were the Seventy, *Luke* 10. 12, 13. Now from the whole, what is there in the Mission of the Twelve, that can constitute them superior

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rrior to the Seventy ? For it appears from the Temporary Commission given unto both, that they were commanded only to preach *The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand*. But before I dismiss this Head, I beg Leave to give a short Answer to the Author of a *Friendly Answer of a Letter written by a Presbyterian*, dated *Edinburgh 1726*. The Reply I reckon myself concern'd to give, is, to his witty Question, concerning *Matthias being ordain'd in the Place of Judas*, and on which he seems to value himself. The Question is, Page. 29. *If the Seventy were of an Order equal to the Apostles ; then, what Need was there, I beseech you, for a new Election, by such a solemn Appeal to Almighty God ?* The Answer I make, is in the Words of the learned Dr. *Stillingsfleet*, *Iren.* P. 2. Page. 218. “ We see, that the Apostles
 “ Themselves were only Probationers, till Christ
 “ solemnly authorized them for their *Apostolical*
 “ *Employment*, *Matth.* 28. 18. *John.* 20. 21. when
 “ their full Commissions were granted them ; and
 “ then indeed they acted with a *Plenitude of Pow-*
 “ *er*, as Governors of the Church, but not before.
 “ Nothing can be inferred then, for any necessary
 “ standing Rule for Church Government, from
 “ any Comparison between the Apostles and the
 “ Seventy, during the Life of Christ; because both
 “ their Missions were Temporary and Occasio-
 “ nal.” I persuade my self, this * Letter-writer had acted as prudently, if he had consulted his Friend Dr. *Stillingsfleet*, before he had inferr'd a Demonstration on this trifling Question. But,

Secondly. I observe, That the Government of the *Jewish Church*, according to the Subordination that was among their Priests, can be no Argument for the

* See *Spanhem. Opera Theolog.* Par. 1. Pag. 436.

the like under the New Testament: For, as the Priesthood of old was Typical of Christ; so, he being come in the Flesh, and having actually fulfilled all Righteousness, there neither is, nor can there be, any Priest but him, nor proper Priesthood, but what is swallowed up in his *Eternal* one, which as to its Oblationary Part, is completed, to the Satisfaction of infinite Justice; and in Heaven, he is now discharging the Intercessory Part thereof. And to dream otherwise, is to set at nought the Design of the Apostle, in the Third Chapter to the *Galatians*, and eighth, ninth, tenth Chapters to the *Hebrews*. Indeed one may, with equal Justice, lay claim to the Redeemer's Regal Office, as he is the Supreme Head of the Church, as pretend to a real Priesthood under the Gospel. And such as set up for Priests, and a real Sacrifice under the New Testament, must consider, that tho' Preaching under the Gospel is express'd by Prophecy; yet the Office of the Ministry is no where called Priesthood. Believers are honoured with the Title of Priests and Kings to God; but those who bear the Office of the Ministry, are never designed by the Name of Priests. The Ministerial Office is Spiritual, and really Moral; but that of Priests was peculiar to the Nation of the *Jews*, and Typical; and so must have ceased, when ever the Antitype appear'd, and fully accomplish'd all that was designed thereby. And if there be any Order or Set of Officers that were under the *Jewish* Dispensation, to which the Ministers of the Gospel have a Relation, or Answer to, it must be to the Ordinary Prophets and Teachers in the Synagogues, who read and expounded the Law and the Prophets unto the People;

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but

† See Spanhem. Oper. Theolog. Par. 1. Page 146.

but had no Concern in the Temple. This is the Judgment of many learned Episcopalians, no less than the Presbyterians, and particularly of Dr. *Stillingsfleet*, Iren. P. 2. Page. 239, &c. Dr. *Lightfoot*, Vol. 2. Page 133. and Dr. *Burnet's* Observ. on the First Canon, Page 2. and on the Second Canon, Page 83.

S E C T. II.

The extraordinary Character of the Apostles held forth in Twelve Particulars; wherein they had no Successor in that Office.

THE next Thing to be consider'd, is, That our Lord being to introduce into the World the New Testament Dispensation, and the Gospel State of Things, the first Officers he employed for that great End, had a Character equal to the Undertaking, and were indeed extraordinary. When the Redeemer had put an End to his personal Ministry, He ascended up on High, led Captivity Captive, and gave Gifts unto Men. And he gave some Apostles, some Prophets, and some Evangelists, Eph. 4. 8, 11. These three Degrees of Office-bearers, had each of them an extraordinary Character, and were sent forth on Purpose to establish the New Testament Church, and make up a compleat Establishment, as to all Things relating thereto. I do not here mention Pastors and Teachers, these being afterwards to be considered: But because the Episcopalians will not admit, That the Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists, were Officers of an extraordinary Character, and had no Successors as such, I shall consider each of them particularly. And,

First.

First. The Apostles were endued with the highest Character of the three different Orders mentioned by the Apostle; and so they are set before *Prophets* and *Evangelists*; and, 1. Cor. 12. 28. 'tis said, *God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets.* Now the Original Word render'd Apostle, is derived from one, which signifies to send forth; and so its common Signification is a *Messenger*, or one sent by another. In this Sense we have it taken, *John.* 13. 16. 2. Cor. 8. 23. *Phil.* 2. 25. but here it denotes Persons in Office, who are distinguished by this Appellation, *Apostles of Jesus Christ.* This specifies the Name, and carries in it more, than when a Person is barely call'd, Your Apostle, as *Epaphroditus*, *Phil.* 2. 25. or the Apostles of the Churches, 2. Cor. 8. 23. For these Places only say, That *Epaphroditus* and the rest spoken of by the Apostle, were missionate and sent forth by the Churches, on some particular Message or Errand; whereas the Twelve receiv'd this Name; because they were immediately sent forth by Christ, on Design to introduce a new Form of Religion into the World, and establish the Gospel Church. And so I do not here speak of them with respect to their temporary and restricted Mission, on which they were only to preach unto the *lost Sheep of the House of Israel*, that *the Kingdom of Heaven was at Hand*; but that which followed on the Back of Christ's Resurrection, and empower'd them to go and teach all Nations; to all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature (a).

Now the Number of the Apostles, in this strict Sense, was Twelve, by the Addition of *Matthias* (b), who was chosen by God, that he might take

(a) Matth. 28. 19, 20. Mark 16. 15. (b) Acts 1. 24, 25.

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Part of the Ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas by Transgression fell: And sometime after, St. Paul was rais'd to the same Dignity, and, in all Respects, made equal to them, so that he was not a Whit behind the very chiefest of the Apostles (a).

This much being laid down in the General, the Extraordinary and Personal Character of the Apostles will be evident to the Unprejudic'd, in the following Particulars.

1. The Name *Apostle*, as it is appropriate unto them, and the Message on which they were sent, says in the strongest Terms, their Character was personal, and ceas'd with themselves. As Christ was sent into the World by the Father, so he sent his Apostles into the World, *John 17. 18. & 20. 21.* It must be observ'd, the Name *Apostle* is one of the Characteristical Marks of the *Messiah*: He was one sent of God, to glorify his Grace in the Salvation of Sinners; to overturn the Kingdom of Satan, and reduce Men to the Obedience of their Rightful Sovereign. And so, when he speaks of himself, *Isa. 48. 16.* his Character is, *The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me.* And indeed there was no Name of the *Messiah* more common, and so generally known and receiv'd by the Old Testament Church, from the first making of the Promise (b), as this of *Apostle*, *He that was to be sent.* And under the Gospel, there is no Designation he more frequently gives unto himself, than this, namely, *One sent of God*, *John 3. 34.* And it is observable, That when *John Baptist* sent his Disciples to enquire of him, if he was the Christ or not, the Question was put, *Art thou He that was to come?* That is, to be sent of God, *Matth. 11. 3. John 11. 27.* The Title or Expression is made use of in the Gospel

(a) 2 Cor. 11. 5. & 12. 11. (b) Genes. 3. 15.

Gospel of *John*, above thirty Times, where it denotes the remarkable Authority he had for his Work. He came not of himself; but was sent of the Father: And so he spoke in his Name, and as his Representative fed the Church, *in the Strength of the Lord, in the Majesty of the Name of the Lord his God*, Mic. 5. 21.

Moreover, it includes the Work incumbent on him as the great Prophet (a) of the Church, to reveal and declare the Mind of the Father unto the Sons of Men, and make known every Thing necessary to be believ'd and practis'd by them, *John* 1. 18. & 13. 6. & 17. 3. Thus then, the Redeemer was the Apostle, or the Sent of the Father, in this, that in his Name, and with his Sovereign Authority he came into the World, made known his Will, and was his Representative, in revealing the whole of the New Testament Dispensation. Now then, as Christ was the Apostle of the Father, in his being thus sent; so these whom he gave in the first Place, as a Deed of Gift unto the Church, and sent forth in his Name, were his Apostles and immediate Representatives. They were sent forth into the World, clothed with his own Authority, to spread a New Religion through the Earth, that was bigotted to Idolatry; make known the whole Plan of Salvation, and whatever was necessary to the planting of the New Testament Church. In this Legation, they represented their Lord so nearly, that it is said, *Matth.* 10. 40. *He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.* This immediate and authoritative Mission is pointed at by *Clemens Romanus*, in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*,
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(a) Mal. 3. 1.

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thians, where he says, ἐξεπεμφθη ἔν ὃ Χριστῷ ἀπὸ Θεοῦ, καὶ οἱ Ἀποστολοὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, *Christ was sent by God, and the Apostles by Christ.* This then is the first personal Prerogative of these whom the Apostle mentions in the Beginning of his Gradation. But,

2. The Apostles were not only immediately sent forth by Christ, but what is more, they were immediately taught and instructed by him, in what they were to publish, in his Name, unto the World. He not only immediately gave them Commandment to go and teach all Nations, and preach the Gospel to every Creature (a); but also instructed them in the Mystery of Salvation, *John 15. 15. I call you no more Servants, for the Servant knoweth not what his Lord doth, but I call you Friends, for all Things I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.*

3. The Apostles, in every Thing they preach'd and delivered unto the People, be it Matter of Faith or Practice, they were under the Divine Inspiration and infallible Direction of the Holy Ghost. This was their Lord's Promise, *John 14. 26. The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, he shall teach you all Things, and bring all Things to your Remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* He, no Doubt, had taught them immediately, before his Death and Sufferings, the Mysteries of the Gospel (b), in so far as they were able to bear them; and, after his Resurrection, he more fully instructed them as to the Nature of his Kingdom, *Acts 1. 3. for tho' it be said, John 15. 15. He made known unto them all Things he had heard of his Father, which was before his putting an End to Sin, and bringing in an everlasting Righteousness by his amazing Sufferings;*

(a) *Matth. 28 19, 20. Mark 16. 15. (b) John 16. 12. &c.*

rings; yet the Original Word *ἐκφανιστος*, rendred, *I have made known*, being in the indefinite Time, has a Respect to the Time to come, as well as the Time by-past. And so, the *Great Apostle of our Profession*, having delivered to his Apostles the Platform of the New Testament Oeconomy, while he was with them in this lower World; He, at the Down-pouring of the Holy Ghost, enlarg'd their Minds, and infallibly directed them to the Remembrance of these Things he had formerly taught them, and putting every Thing in Execution according to his Mind. There were many Things he had to say to them before his Death, which they were not able to bear; and even his more ample Instructions given unto them, during the Space of Forty Days, immediately before his Ascension, were not sufficient to remove the Remains of their Prejudices, as to the Nature and Extent of his Kingdom, which appears from *Acts* 1. 6. And therefore, that their Souls might be enlarg'd, and their Minds truly enlightned in the clear Knowledge of those Things delivered unto them, in their enlarg'd Extent and Spirituality, so as they should infallibly build up the Kingdom of God, in an exact Agreeableness to the Mind of him that sent them, they were put under the unerring Influences of the Divine Spirit. And so, the clear uptaking of all those Things given them in Commission, and infallible Knowledge of every Thing belonging to Christ's House, was not till the Day of *Pentecost*, on which the Divine Spirit was poured forth, who, thereafter, gradually imparted to them the clear and unerring Knowledge of what they heard, and *guided them into all Truth*, John 16. 13.

4. The Apostles were Eye-witnesses of our Lord's personal Ministry, and particularly of his Resurrection

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rection from the Dead. This was necessary unto an Apostle; and so, in calling *Matthias* to that Office, it is said, *Acts* 1. 21, 22. *One must be ordained to be a Witness of his Resurrection, of these Men which have companied with us, all the Time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us-----*. This raised the Authority of their Testimony, when they could say as *Peter* (a), *We were Eye-witnesses of his Majesty*; and *John* (b), *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you*. Thus, *St. Paul*, tho' he had not been among the Number of these that accompanied the Disciples in Christ's personal Ministry, yet he was an uncontestable Witness of his Resurrection, being immediately call'd by him from Heaven: And he expressly says, *1 Cor.* 15. 7, 8. *He was seen of James, and then of all the Apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due Time*.

5. The Apostles had an Universal and Unlimited Commission; they were not restricted to any particular City, Nation or Kingdom; but commanded to *go unto all the World, all Nations, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth* (c). Agreeably to this, they went forth from *Jerusalem*; preaching the Gospel wherever they came; settled Churches in every City; gave forth Universal Constitutions; and wrote Catholick Epistles. And the Apostle *Paul* owns the Universality of his Charge, when he says, *2 Cor.* 11. 28. *That which cometh on me daily, the Care of all the Churches*. And such as restrict the Charge of the Apostles, and confine them to particular Sees, as *Peter* to *Antioch* or *Rome*, *James* to *Jerusalem*, *John* to *Ephesus*, &c. act in express Contradiction to the Letter of Christ's Com-

(a) 2 Pet. 1. 16. (b) 1 John 1. 1, --- 3. (c) Matth. 28. 19. 20. Mark 16. 15. Acts 1. 8.

Commission, which was given to them in General, and every one of them in Particular ; so that no after Agreement could abridge any of them from exercising their Authority and Duty towards the Sons of Men, in whatever Part of the World, as Occasion required. Besides,

6. The Apostles were endued with a surprising Power, by which they performed most remarkable Miracles. They spoke in Tongues formerly unknown to them, and in which they had not been instructed ; they cast out Devils ; they kill'd the Strength of the most violent Poison ; heal'd the Sick ; rais'd the Dead ; open'd the Eyes of the Blind ; to the great Surprise of Beholders, and unspeakable Joy of many (a). By this it was, they gave unquestionable Evidence of their Apostolical Mission, and obtain'd the more easy Access for preaching the Gospel among the Heathen Nations. They being sent forth to introduce a new Religion into the World, that was bigotted to Idolatry ; were to grapple with the Sophistry of the Philosophers ; the Cunning of the Politicians ; and the Power and Triumphs of the *Roman* Empire : So that for them to have made Way for their Ministry, in these Circumstances, when the whole of Mankind were their Enemies, without Miracles, would, in itself, have been the most amazing Miracle of all. This Power was, indeed, bestowed on others (b), besides the Apostles ; tho' not in that Degree, and in such an eminent Manner as on them. But that all that were baptized and believed, had this Power, as *Grotius* * maintains, is most cross to the Apostle's Reasoning, 1 Cor. 12. 29, 30. But,

7. As

(a) Acts 1. & 3. 5, 6, 8, 10. & 13. 16. & 19. & 28. & 4. 14, 16. (b) 1 Cor. 12. 9, 10. * Annot. on Mark 16. 17.

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7. As the Apostles were endued with a more eminent Gift of working Miracles, than any others, particularly in restoring Sight to the Blind; raising the Dead; and privileg'd with a greater Measure of Tongues, by Reason of the more plentiful Effusion of the Spirit on them (a); so it was peculiar to them, to confer the Extraordinary Gift of the Holy Ghost on others, by the Imposition of their Hands, *Acts* 8. 12, 14, 17. & 19. 6. This was never practis'd by any but the Apostles, if it be not in one Instance related by Dr. *Whitby*, on *Acts* 9. 17.

8. The Apostles were endued with a peculiar Energy in preaching the Gospel. The Force of their Expressions was as a Sword piercing into the Souls of their Hearers, or a Hammer breaking them in Pieces, or making them more hard and impregnable. The great Subject Matter of their Sermons, was to recommend a Crucified Christ, as the true Object of Faith, Adoration and Reverence. Now, considering how remarkably stumbling the Doctrine of the Cross was unto the *Jews*, and no less Foolishness to the *Gentiles*; how injurious it appeared to be unto *Moses*, had in the greatest Esteem by the One, and contrary to all the Notions of Religion ever entertain'd by the Other; and, at the same Time, a deadly Enemy to the Wickedness, Lusts and Passions of Men, and all the bewitching Charms of Sin, in which both were so deeply immers'd; how remarkable, then, must the Energy and Force of the Apostles Sermons have been? No sooner was the Holy Ghost poured forth upon them, than, at one single Sermon, by *Peter*, Three thousand Souls were made subject

(a) *Acts* 1. 8. & 2. 4 1 *Cor.* 14. 18.

subject to the despised Cross, *Acts* 2. 37, 41. Nay, such was the Efficacy of their Sermons, that in a short Time, Myriads of People, and Crouds of Persons of all Denominations, were conquered by them, and put a generous Contempt on all the Scorn and Persecutions they were exposed unto, on Account of their Faith, *Acts* 6. 7. & 13. 12. & 17. 34. & 2. 42. & 10. 44. & 4. 4. &c. This appeared also, in that the *High Priest*, the *Rulers*, *Elders* and *Scribes*, together with all the other learned Men among the *Jews*, who were obstinate Enemies to Christ and his Apostles, were made to own the Boldness and Energy of their Discourses; and when they consider'd, that, originally, they were but unlearned, and ignorant Men, they were struck with Admiration and Wonder, *Acts* 4. 13. And it is particularly to be remarked, that *with great Power the Apostles gave Witness of the Resurrection of Christ*, *Acts* 4. 33. And the Apostle Paul says of himself, *1 Cor.* 2. 4. *And my Speech, and my Preaching, was not with the enticing Words of Mens Wisdom, but in the Demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power.* And, *Col.* 2. 29. *I labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.*

9. The Apostles were endued with the Gift of Prophecy, and had the Discerning of Spirits. By the Spirit they infallibly explained the more dark and hidden Writings of the Old Testament; foretold future Events; and warned the World of approaching, and after Judgments, *2 Tim.* 3. 1, 2, 3. *1 Tim.* 4. 1, 2, 3. *Acts* 20. 29, 30. *2 Pet.* 2. 1. *1 John* 2. 18. and what is the most Part of the Revelation of *John* the Divine, but a Bundle of Prophecies, concerning the Rise, Progress, Acme, Declension, and final Overthrow of Antichrist's Kingdom; and Things that were to fall out in the latter Days?

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Besides, the Apostles had the Discerning of Spirits; and so could discover the Hypocrisy, Dissimulation and Cunning of Mens Hearts, as is evident from *Acts* 5. 1, --- 10. And this was of no small Use unto them, in planting and establishing Churches; and what directed these Immediate Ambassadors, whom to prefer unto the Sacred Ministerial Office, in those Cities where they had gathered a compleat Number to the Profession of Christ.

10. The Apostles were vested with a Power to inflict remarkable Judgments, and surprising Strokes on the Hypocritical, and such as were irreconcilable Opposers of their Ministry. What more amazing Instance can we have of this, than *Ananias* and *Sapphira's* being struck with Death, while the Apostle was laying home the Crime of Dissimulation, and charging them with giving the Lie to the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 5. 5, --- And the inspired Apostle *Paul* gives us a further Discovery of this peculiar Power, while *Elymas* the Sorcerer was struck with Blindness, for *perverting the right Ways of the Lord*, *Acts* 13. 8, 9, 10, 11. This remarkable Gift, that accompanied the Apostles in the Course of their Ministry, and spreading the Gospel, had a Tendency to make the great Ones of the Earth pay a due Regard to their Character, and Doctrine; strike Fear and Terror into the Hearts of their violent Enemies and Opposers; and, at the same Time, influence their Followers to pay a becoming Regard and Submission to their Authority, *Acts* 5. 12, &c. and 13. 12.

11. The Apostles had an Authoritative Power to plant Churches with standing and ordinary Officers, and establish Laws and Regulations for the right and agreeable Government thereof. In consequence

sequence of this, they gave a Being to these Office-bearers which were to be continued for the perfecting and building up the Visible Body of Christ; laid down the Discipline of the Redeemer's House; Regulated its Worship, and determined the Method of Judicial Procedures, for the equitable inflicting of Censures, that the Honour of the King of Saints might be vindicated, and Decency, Order and Unity preserved among all the Members of that Sacred Society. For a Proof of all these, consider the several Scriptures insert on the Foot of this Page, * of which we shall have Occasion to speak more fully afterwards. All I shall here observe, is, That this Power was only competent to the Apostles; and none that come after them have the smallest Claim thereto, or Title to alter one Pin of what they have set up, in laying the Platform and Model of the New Testament Church.

12. The Apostles had a further Evidence of their Extraordinary Character; namely, a Power to indite Epistles, either to particular Churches, or the whole Catholick Church of Christ; which had a perpetual and absolute binding Force on their Hearts and Lives. All these Epistles, which make up the great Part of the New Testament Canon, were indited by Apostles. And so it is observable, That not only *St. Paul* asserts his Apostleship and Mission, in the Entry of most of his Epistles; but also *Peter, James, John* and *Jude*, in those indited by them. For tho' *John*, in his General Epistles, does not declare in express Terms, his Name and
Apostle-

* Eph. 4. 8, 11, 12, 13. 1 Peter 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. Acts 14. 23. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Rom. 12. 7, 8. Philip. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 3. 8, 15. Acts 6. 1, 2, 3, 4. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Titus 3. 10. 1 Cor. 3. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 13. 2, 10. Acts 20. 28, 29. 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2, 3. 1 Cor. 14. 14, 15, 16. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Col. 3. 16. Eph. 5. 19. Matth. 28. 19, 20. 1 Cor. 11. 23, &c. 1 Cor. 10. 16. 1 Tim. 5. 14. 1 Cor. 14. Matth. 18. 1 Cor. 5. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 20. 2 Cor. 10. 6. 1 Tim. 5. 20 &c.

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Apostleship; yet he gives a most convincing Account of both, when he inserts himself as a Witness to Christ's personal Ministry: And, in his Epistles to the Seven Churches of *Asia*, designs himself *John* the Servant of Jesus Christ, *Rev. i. 1, &c.* Now what is the Reason wherefore the Apostles, in all their Epistles, make Mention of their Name and Immediate Mission, either more expressly, or by such Characteristicks as leave no Room to doubt of their Author; but to make known the Authority, by which they wrote, and that they were impowered to reveal the Mystery of the Gospel, and they to whom they indited their Epistles, were to subject themselves to their Authority, and resolve their Faith in the Discovery of the Will of God made by them. This is further manifest, when we consider, That when any Church called in Question what they had been taught by an Apostle, and were like to be led aside from the Faith of the Gospel, the Apostle *Paul*, that they might be made sensible of the absolute Obedience they were bound to yield to him, and resolve their Faith in the Authority of Christ speaking in him, as his immediate Messenger for that End, mentions his Apostolical Authority in the Entry of the Epistle indited to them, with more than ordinary Emphasis, as is plain from that of the *Galatians*, *Gal. i. 1.* But when the same Apostle is writing to the *Philippians* and *Thessalonians*, where his Apostolical Authority was sufficiently own'd, and nothing he had deliver'd to them was called in Question, he does not so expressly declare his Mission; but leaves it to be gathered from his Name and Ordinary Attendants, whom he mentions with himself, in the Entry, and other Parts, of those Epistles.

And

And there seems nothing to be more plain, than, That the Want of the Name of *Paul*, in the Entry of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, was the Source from whence all the Objections against its Authority, have had their Rise and first Beginning, both in the first Age of the Church, and in latter Times. His Name being prefixt to all his other Epistles, and not insert in this, gave Occasion to some to reject its Authority; and others, not to allow him as its true Author. But when it is considered, That these among the *Hebrews*, who embraced the Christian Faith, did not change the old Foundation or Church State, established on the Law and the Prophets; but only look'd on their Faith in Christ, the *Messiah*, now Come in the Flesh, to bring in a greater Revenue of Privileges to them than what formerly they enjoyed; there will appear just Ground wherefore St. *Paul* did not, in his ordinary Method, insist on his Apostolical Authority. The Apostolical Authority was the immediate Ground, or Reason of the Assent or Obedience of those to whom he indited his other Epistles: But he, instead of making Use of this with the *Jews*, who still professed their Adherence to the Law of *Moses*, and the Prophets, goes on the common Principles of the Old Testament, which they stood by, and from thence deduced their Gospel Faith. These Principles, being laid down in the Beginning of that Epistle, as the Foundation on which the Rest of it is built, there was no Need of prefixing his Name, or expressing his Apostolical Authority; seeing he had made up that otherwise, from the Authority of the Old Testament, which was acknowledged by them. This was not, as if the Apostolical Authority had not a binding Force on the *Jews*; but because they professed a

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superlative Regard to *Moses* and the *Prophets*, therefore he look'd on an Authority deduced from them, to be the most effectual Method to break them off from their Old Church State, unto the Model of the Gospel Establishment, made by Christ, agreeable to the Fulness of Time.

Besides, that the Apostle *Paul* was the Author of the Epistle indited to the *Hebrews*, could not miss to be gathered by them, from the several Discoveries he gives of himself, in the latter Part thereof. He makes mention of the great Compassion the *Hebrews* had on him, in his Bonds, and how they took, joyfully the Spoiling of their Goods, and were Companions with him in his Sufferings.* Now the Sufferings of the Apostle *Paul* in *Judea*, were remarkable, well known at *Rome*, *Phil.* 1. 13. famed through all the Churches, and particularly set forth in the *Acts*; so that those who had sympathiz'd with him in these, could not miss to know, who it was, that wrote them. And what is more, he speaks of *Timothy*, his most intimate and close Companion, as being with him at *Rome*, *Heb.* 13. 23. compare *Phil.* 3. 13, 14. Moreover, this Epistle has, in its Close, the Apostle *Paul's* usual and Apostolical Salutation, *Grace be with you all.* In all these Epistles, indited by any of the rest of the Apostles, there is none of them concluded with a Salutation. Now, this was peculiar to *Paul*; and what he himself gives, as a Sign, in all his Epistles, whereby they were to be known, is, That this Salutation, in all his Epistles, was still engraven with his own hand, 2 *Thes.* 3. 17. therefore, these to whom the Original Copy was sent, could not but know, *Paul* was its Author. In a Word, the Apostle *Peter* expressly says, that *Paul* wrote

wrote to the *Hebrews*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 15. even as our beloved Brother Paul also, according to the *Wisdom* given unto him, hath written unto you, that is, to the dispersed *Jews*, to whom *Peter* wrote his *Epistle*. This may serve to remove the smallest Remains of Hesitation or Doubt as to this Matter. I have the more fully spoken to this Head, to remove any Objections that may be made, as to the Apostolical Authority; and to expose the Vanity of such as pretend to be the Successors of the Apostles, as such.

Now, from the Whole, we conclude, That the Apostolical Character was extraordinary, and ceased with themselves. And when the Episcopalians plead, That the Apostolical Power was transmitted to their Bishops *in solidum*, as some of them phrase it, they must allow us to say, We are not to take their Word for it, till they give us a manifest Discovery, That they are vested with all the Signs of an Apostle.

S E C T. III.

The especial Character of the Prophets, shewing their extraordinary Office.

THE next Order of Officers, mentioned by the Apostle, are *Prophets*. These we hold also to be of an extraordinary Character; they being placed above the Evangelists, and below the Apostles. They are not only placed before *Teachers*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. but even before *Evangelists*, *Eph.* 4. 11. who, by the most of Judicious Writers, are acknowledged to have had an extraordinary and temporary Office. And what makes this the more manifest, Prophets are always placed next to the Apostles,

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files, and the Mystery of Christ, which was hid from former Ages, and is now made known in the Gospel, is expressly said to be *revealed unto his Holy Apostles and Prophets, by the Spirit*, Eph. 3. 5. The ordinary Gifts belonging to Pastors and Teachers, were *the Word of Wisdom*, and the *Word of Knowledge* (a); but the Gift of *Prophecy* is ranked among the extraordinary Endowments, 1 Cor. 12: 10, 11. And, that they had a Character distinct from the Apostles on the one Hand, and Teachers on the other, is manifest from 1 Cor. 12. 28, 29. *And he hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers: Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers? In a Word, the Name Prophet, every where, in Sacred Writ, denotes a Person in Office, and one sent and called of God, to bear his Message; and what that is, which belonged to these mentioned by the Apostle, and which points forth their extraordinary Character, will appear in these two Particulars.*

1. These Prophets, sent forth to bear Hand in the Planting and Establishing the *New Testament Church*, were, by the Divine Spirit, enabled to declare future Events, and foretel Things that were to come. This Power was included in the Apostolical Character, it being the superior Order; but belonged to Prophets in particular, and is involved in the very Name. Of this Order were these spoken of, Acts 11. 27, 28. *And in those Days came Prophets from Jerusalem, unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit, that there should be a great Dearth, throughout all the World. The same Agabus, by the Spirit, foretold Paul's Troubles at Jerusalem, and Delivery into the Hands of the Gentiles* (b).

2. It

(a) 1 Cor. 12. 7, 8. (b) Acts 11. 16, 11. See Acts 13. 1, 2, 3. & 21. 8, 9.

2. It belonged to these *New Testament Prophets*, infallibly to explain and apply the more difficult Places of the *Old Testament* Prophecies; and from thence to establish the Truth of the Gospel, and Mystery of Christ. They differ'd from ordinary *Pastors* and *Teachers* (a), in that they were under the immediate Influences of the same Divine Spirit, which, at first, inspired the Prophets under the *Old Testament* Dispensation. Their teaching was not the mere Fruit of Industry, acquired Parts and natural Abilities; and therefore, when the Church was come together, the Apostle directs, that they should *speak Two or Three*, and the *Rest should judge*; but then, *if any Thing was revealed to another that sat by, the first was to hold his Peace*, 1 Cor. 14. 29, 30. By which it is evident, they were under the immediate Influence of the Holy Ghost. And what is more, the Apostle calleth it a Gift, 1 Cor. 13. 2. And it is joined with the other extraordinary Fruits of the Spirit; *Tongues, Interpretations, and Revelations* are connected together, 1 Cor. 14. 26. & 12. 10. And of these the *Apostle* gives the Preference to Revelation or Prophecy, because, hereby, the Church was edified, and such as believed, had the Mystery of Faith infallibly opened up unto them; whereas, Tongues were only a Sign unto them that believe not (b). And it is remarkable, that those whom the Apostle laid his Hands upon, *Acts 19. 6. the Holy Ghost came on them*; and, as the Fruit thereof, they *spoke with Tongues, and prophesied*. And what the Nature of this Prophecy was, we may, in some Measure, gather from *Acts 15. 32. And Judas and Silas, being Prophets also themselves, ex-*
C 3 *horted*

(a) See Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, Lib. 5. Page 421. (b) 1 Cor. 14. 3, 4, 6, 22, 24, 31.

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horted the Brethren with many Words, and comforted them. To this let us join what the Apostle remarks, Rom. 16. 25, 26. Now, to him that is of Power to stablish you, ----- according to the Revelation of the Mystery, which was kept secret since the World began, but now is made Manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the Commandment of the everlasting God----. Now, what I observe, is, That the Gospel Method of Salvation is a Mystery which was, indeed, made known in the Scriptures of the Prophets, but so as it was not clearly and openly perceiv'd till the Incarnation of Christ, when it was revealed by him to his Holy Apostles and Prophets. This exactly agrees with Eph. 3. 5. The Mystery of Christ, which; in other Ages, was not made known to the Sons of Men, as it is now revealed, unto his Holy Apostles and Propkets, by the Spirit. It was from the Prophets, that the Apostles and New Testament Prophets deduced their Discourses and Sermons, and confirm'd every Truth which they delivered: And, in this, they were under the infallible Influences of the Divine Spirit.

This Order of Officers might justly be called Prophets, seeing the Object about which they were conversant, was Prophecies; the Spirit, whose Meaning they were unfolding, was the Spirit of Prophecy; The Persons, whose Writings they were explaining, were Prophets; And he who instructed them in the Whole, was the same Spirit, who inspired the Holy Men of God under the first Dispensation. And if we take a View of the Circumstance of Time in which these Prophets flourish'd, their Usefulness and remarkable Service in the Church will appear to have been very necessary. In the first Beginnings of Christianity, they were of remarkable Service, in convincing the
Jews,

Jews, and others professing the Law of *Moses*, while the Canon of the *New Testament* was not, as yet, committed to Writing, and till its being brought, at least, nigh to an End. It was sometime after the Ascension of Christ, before any Part of the *New Testament* was written; and a great many Years before all the Epistles, which make up the great Part thereof, were indited: And so, the Apostles, being but few in Number, there was much Need of Prophets, infallibly to explain, in particular Churches, the Scriptures of the Prophets: And thereby make known unto them, *the Riches of the Glory of the Myltery of Christ, hid from Ages and Generations*, that they might be established, built up, and encouraged in the Faith of the Gospel. But, as soon as the Apostles had made up the *New Testament* Canon, or a complete Revelation of all those Things, in Writing, which *Moses* and the Prophets had declared should come, there was no further Need of Prophets; the great End of their Office being accomplished; that which made them necessary, being, the Want of the Canon of the whole Scriptures, in the Hands of every particular Church; which, at the Beginning, could not be accomplished. From the whole, it is evident to a Demonstration, that the Prophets, in the first Beginnings of Christianity, were Officers of an extraordinary Character.

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S E C T. IV.

The especial Character of Evangelists, shewing their Office to be extraordinary; and, that the Offices of Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists, expired with themselves.

THE last Order of extraordinary Officers mentioned by the *Apostle*, is *Evangelists*. By these, I do not mean such as were inspired to write the Gospels, the Nativity, Life, Sufferings, and Exaltation of the Redeemer, as such, particularly *Mark* and *Luke*; but such as were the close Attendants and Companions of the Apostles in their Travels, and assisting to them in planting and watering the Churches. These I call extraordinary Officers, they being placed in the Apostles Gradation, immediately below *Prophets*, and above the ordinary standing-*Ministers, Pastors* and *Teachers*. This is acknowledg'd by the most able and learned of the Episcopalians; which is, elsewhere, made evident from their Writings. The Office of an *Evangelist*, as is own'd by all, was not fix'd to any particular settled Church, requiring a special Attendance there; which is expressly required in every standing and ordinary Church-officer. Besides, their Call to that Office appears to have been Extraordinary, and, in some Respect, Immediate; so that they were a Kind of secondary Apostles. This may be gathered from what is related concerning the Vocation of *Timothy*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 18. and the remarkable and extraordinary Powers that were given unto *Philip*, by which he wrought Miracles, and gave convincing Signs of his Mission, *Acts* 8. 6, 13. And indeed, such Officers, in the first planting

of the Christian Church. 41

ting of Christianity, were most necessary, and of great Use to the Apostles. The Apostles, when travelling thro' various Countries, preach'd the Gospel wherever they came; and after they had converted a competent Number to Christianity, they formed them into Churches: And, as to the Apostles was given the discerning of Spirits, (and it is not improbable, even to Evangelists) so, out of those who were their First Fruits, they appointed some to be Rulers and Ministers. Now, in regard, that of those who were but newly converted to the Faith of Christ, there might not be found a competent Number, duly qualified for the Ministry, it was necessary, they should, for some Time, be train'd up, and more fully instructed in the Mystery of the Gospel. And, as the Apostles had not Time to remain long in one Place; so it was the great Business of the *Evangelists*, to perfect the Establishments they had begun, to ordain Bishops, that were wanting, in any City, and make up a complete Settlement in every Church. Thus, the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, when Time would not allow him to remain so long with the *Greeks*, as to ordain Bishops for all their Cities, and put every Thing in due Order, he gave Commandment to *Titus*, his Fellow Traveller, to stay behind, and make up *what was wanting*, Tit. 1. 5. His remaining in this Place was not fixed, but only for a Time, to answer the present Exigence of Affairs, and when these were over, he was to return to the Apostle, Tit. 3. 12. He (a) appears to have been sent also to *Dalmatia*, 2 Tim. 4. 10. as *Timothy* (b) was to *Macedonia*, *Corinth*, *Thessalonica*,

(a) See and compare 2 Cor. 2. 13. & 7. 6, 7. & 8. 6. 16: 23. & 12. 18. Gal. 2. 1, 3. (b) See and compare Rom. 16. 21. & 16. 10. 2 Cor. 1. 19. & 3. 2. Phil. 2. 19. Col. 1. 1. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Tim. 4. 9, 12. Heb. 13. 23.

salonica, and left at *Ephesus*, Acts 19. 22. 1 Cor.
 4. 17. 1 *Thes.* 3. 2. Of this Order was *Mark*,
Luke, *Tychicus*, *Barnabas*, *Philip*, &c. And *Timo-*
thy and *Titus*, however much they are questioned
 by some, as not being extraordinary Officers, but
 fix'd Bishops; yet no less Episcopalian than Dr.
Whitby, expressly calls them so, in his Preface to
 the Epistle to *Titus*: His Words are these, " These
 " two Instances absolutely taken, afford us no con-
 " vincing Argument for a settled Diocesan Epif-
 " copacy, because, there is nothing which proves
 " they did, or were to exercise these Acts of Go-
 " vernment, rather as Bishops than Evangelists:
 " For it is certain, the Order of Evangelists was
 " superior to that of Governments, and so in-
 " cluded an Authority to do these Acts of Govern-
 " ment. Accordingly, in these Places where the
 " Evangelists preach'd, they did, *πομπέας καθίστασι*
 " constitute Pastors, and then went on to preach
 " in other Places----. That if, by saying *Timothy*
 " and *Titus* were Bishops, the One of *Ephesus*, and
 " the Other of *Crete*, we understand, That they
 " took upon them those Churches, or Dioceses,
 " as their fixed and peculiar Charge, in which
 " they were to preside for Term of Life, I believe
 " *Timothy* and *Titus* were not thus Bishops. For,
 " 1. Both *Timothy* and *Titus* were Evangelists.
 " Now the Work of an Evangelist, saith *Eusebius*,
 " was this, To lay the Foundation of the Faith in
 " Barbarous Nations; to constitute them Pastors;
 " and, having committed to them the cultivating
 " these new Plantations, they passed on to other
 " Countries and Nations. 2. As for *Titus*, he was
 " only left at *Crete*, to ordain Elders in every Ci-
 " ty, and to set in Order Things that were want-
 " ing; having therefore done that Work, he had
 done

“ done all that was assign’d him in that Station :
 “ And therefore, St. Paul sends for him, the ve-
 “ ry next Year, to *Nicopolis*.”

He that inclines to see more to the same Pur-
 pose, may read the forecited *Preface*, and he will
 see more from him in the *Appendix*.

Thus then, from the Whole, we conclude, That
 the *Apostles*, *Prophets* and *Evangelists*, had an Ex-
 traordinary Character, and their Office expired
 with themselves. To this Dr. *Whitby* agrees; for,
 on *Eph. 4. 14.* he says, “ Since therefore, the *Apo-*
 “ *stles*, *Prophets* and *Evangelists*, were only given
 “ in the First Age of the Church, it evidently
 “ follows, that the Persons mention’d in this
 “ Text, were not given them to do this to the
 “ World’s End.” From this I infer, That the
 Powers belonging to any of these Three Orders, as
 such, were not, nor could be transmitted to any
 other Persons, or Office-bearers in the Church :
 For, if *Apostles*, *Prophets* and *Evangelists* were to
 cease in the Church, the Powers belonging to these,
 as such, could not be continued in it, or be trans-
 mitted to others, without involving a Contradicti-
 on.

But, after all, if it should be granted to a zea-
 lous Episcopalian, That all these distinct Orders
 were to be continued in the Church, what would
 he make of it ? Would he not be as much out in
 his Calculation of Church-officers as the Presbyte-
 rians ? For, instead of Three Orders, Bishops,
 Presbyters and Deacons, he should have, at least,
 Five, if not Six; *Apostles*, *Prophets*, *Evangelists*,
Pastors, *Teachers* and *Deacons*. I mention this for
 the Sake of the Author of the *Essays* concerning
Church Government, who charges the Presbyterians
 with intolerable *Presumption*, for abrogating any of
 the

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the sacred Offices, mentioned by the Apostle, *Eph.* 4. 11. But how far he acted in Honesty and Judgment, in making this Charge, let the Reader judge. For, Part 1. Page 20. he says, "In these Verses we have an uncontestable Testimony, proving the perpetual Continuance of these Offices instituted by Christ, taken from the End and Design for which they were instituted, &c." Now observe, what Account he makes of all this, and how he slips off with the Honour of a Contradiction, smoothly telling his Reader, Page 21. "These different Designations do not import different Offices, but different Exercises of the same Office." And so the Office of an *Apostle*, *Prophet* and *Evangelist*, *Pastor* and *Teacher*, are but one and the same Office, differently exercised. I leave this Author, whoever he was, to adjust his Notions, make them consistent with themselves, with the inspired Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28, 29, 30. and, if he pleases, with the Sentiments of his good Friend Dr. *Whitby* on the Place.

To conclude this Head, whenever any of the Episcopalians shall be pleas'd to give us a clear Scripture Evidence, That any of their Bishops have the several Signs of an *Apostle*, already mentioned, or the Powers and Characters of the *Prophets*, or *Evangelists*, then we shall grant them to be the Successors of the *Apostles*, *Prophets*, or *Evangelists*, or to any One of these, to whom they have the clearest Claim. And till they do this, we have just Ground to put the Question, as to the Orders of their Church Officers: *Whence are these Things? Are they from Heaven, or from Men (a)?* If they pretend they are from Heaven, we will gladly receive them, as soon as they shall vouch them to be so:
But

(a) *Matth.* 23. 25.

But it all be of Men, and they plead no more, we shall give them this short Answer, That we have *one Master, even Christ*, and call no Man Master upon Earth, *Matth. 23. 10.*

S E C T. V.

The Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists, transmitted their ordinary Powers of dispensing Word and Sacraments, Ordination and Government, to a standing Ministry of Pastors and Teachers, to be continued in the Church for its Edification.

THAT which is next to be observed, is, That as the *Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists* had an extraordinary Character, and such Powers as have been already mentioned, and by Virtue whereof they were above *Pastors and Teachers*; so they were vested with a standing and ordinary Character, in which they had Successors, and a Promise for their Continuance, for perfecting of the Saints, by the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ: Till they shall all come in the Unity of the Faith, &c. (a). The *Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists*, as such, were indeed superior to *Pastors and Teachers*; and that which made them to be so, was their Extraordinary Powers, Gifts and Character: But then, if we consider them in their ordinary Capacity, as having the Power of dispensing Word and Sacraments, Ordination and Government, they were such Kind of Officers, of which there could be more than One in one single Church, and, in Fact, were in the single Church of Jerusalem; that is, mere *Presbyters*; and so, in this Respect,

(b) Eph. 4. 12.

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Respect, they were capable of conferring their Powers on others; which they actually did, wherever they planted Churches. The transmitting of these Powers to faithful Men, was all that was necessary, *for the Edifying the Body of Christ, &c.* The Church being once duly constitute, and the Scripture Canon fill'd up, which was the proper and peculiar Work of the Apostles; and, in so far, their Extraordinary Powers were necessarily connected with that great End. By them it was, that the Foundation of the Church was laid, and in this they were infallibly directed to act the Part of wise Master-builders; and then that which remain'd to *Pastors* and *Teachers*, to whom they made the Investiture of the Ministerial Powers, was, to *Bring in*, and then *Build up* the several Members of Christ, on the *Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Christ himself being the Chief Corner Stone.* To imagine that these Extraordinary Officers were any otherwise necessarily connected with the End proposed by the Apostle, and that their Continuance was design'd till the End of Time, is to make the Laying the Foundation of Christ's House, to be of equal Continuance as to Time, with the making up and completing the Superstructure, on that Foundation, contrary to all Sense and Reason. And if it shall be granted, they were only so far continued, as was necessary to carry on the *Work of the Ministry*, the necessary Mean, for the *perfecting of the Saints*, and *edifying of the Body of Christ*, which the Apostle plainly intends, this is all we are pleading for; and this is what they were capable of making the Investiture of to others; and thereby preserve a standing Ministry. For clearing this, let it be observ'd, *First*, That the Office of the Ministry was a *Gift* from Christ, and what belong'd to him

him as the King and Head of the Church: This he made unto her, after his Resurrection from the Dead, and upon his Ascension to Heaven. By this it appears, That the Church of Christ is built on his Resurrection, asserted in our First General Proposition; and that the Ministerial Powers are not deriv'd from the Church, or Members thereof, or any other Power on Earth. Thus, the Call of the People does not confer the Ministerial Office.

Secondly, The great Scope of the Apostle, in the Place, is, to shew the Necessity of Unity and Peace in the Church, from this Consideration, That all the different Offices, appointed therein, were from the same Author, *Christ*, and had all the same End, with respect unto the Redeemer's House, *the Perfecting of the Saints, and Edifying the Body of Christ*. In promoting this great End, the Apostles were concerned, and the other Extraordinary Officers under them, in that they had a peculiar Hand in laying the Foundation, and introducing the Gospel State of the Church, and making an exact Pattern of all Things to be observ'd, in *Perfecting* or bringing into Joynt, *the Saints, and Edifying the Church or Body of Christ*. This exactly agrees with the Characters of the Three First Orders of Officers, already laid down and explain'd.

Thirdly, The ordinary Mean which the Apostle lays down, to be continued till the End of Time, for effectuating this End, is the publick Exercise, or Work of the Ministry. In the Original, this is call'd, *ἔργον διακονίας*, which includes all the Parts of the Ministerial Function, Preaching, Blessing and Sanctifying Things, to Represent, Seal and Apply the Body and Blood of Christ, together with Ordination and Government; and, in the strongest Terms, excludes a Lordly Dominion over the Church;

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Church; and, at the same Time, requires unwearyed Labour, Activity and Diligence, in the Promoting the great End of the Gospel. Nay, 'tis to be observ'd, That the *Work of the Ministry* is placed in the Middle, between the two Ends propos'd, *Perfecting the Saints*, and *Edifying the Body of Christ*; thereby to point forth, That it was a Mean equally concern'd in both these; and that it was by the Continuance and faithful Discharge thereof they were to be promoted. Now, *the Work of the Ministry*, being all that was to be continued till the End of Time, makes it evident, That the Extraordinary Character of the Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists, was to cease with themselves; and that nothing they were vested with, was to remain, but what they made the Investiture of to *Pastors* and *Teachers*, which was the *Work of the Ministry*. They having acted the Part that was laid upon them, by Virtue of their respective Missions, and Extraordinary Characters, in bringing in, and making up the *New Testament* State of the Church, till its Canon was completed, with a View to the Perfecting of the Saints, and Edifying the Body of Christ, *by the Work of the Ministry*, which they laboured in during their Lives. All that was needful, was, to leave the Churches planted with such Officers as were to continue to the World's End; and from Time to Time to be set apart for the Ministerial Work, that the End propos'd might be duly accomplished. And so, *Pastors* and *Teachers* are the Office-bearers immediately joined to the Ministerial Work, to be continued in the Church; and there is next to a full Stop between them and *Evangelists*, in the Original Copies, at least, in those which are before me.

CHAP.



CHAP. II.

The Nature and Import of the Word Ἐκκλησία or Church. An Account of such as are Members of the Visible Church. The Power of the Keys are made over, by a Deed of Gift, to the Office-bearers of the Church. A single Church is made up of more Congregations than One, all subjected to one Class or Presbytery. The Divine Right of Synods and National Assemblies.

S E C T. I.

The Word Church is used to denote, 1. The Invisible Catholick Church of the Redeemed. 2. The Visible Church, and that either Catholick, throughout the whole Earth, professing Christ; or Branches thereof, designed from the particular Places of their Residence. 3. An Assembly of Rulers meeting together in an Ecclesiastick Judicatory. This last Sense of the Word Church, largely proved from Mat. 18. 17. as also from Acts 18. 22. & 15. 22.

THAT the Constitution of the Gospel Church may appear more clearly, it will be necessary, in the Entry, to enquire into the Notion and Import of the Word *Church*, and its different Acceptations in Sacred Writ. This Word Ἐκκλησία or *Church*, is derived from ἐκκαλεῖν, which signifies, to *evocate* or *call forth*. Thus, the Original Word Ἐκκλησία, or *Church*, denotes a

D

Multitude

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Multitude or Company of Persons called forth, which includes a certain Term from whence they are called, the Term to which, and the Mean by which, namely *Vocation*. This is the general Notion of the Word, in the New Testament, and other Writings. And sometimes it denotes a vast Company or Multitude of Persons called forth by Publick Authority; so 'tis said, *Acts* 7. 38. *This is he that was in the Church in the Wilderness*; which is to be understood of the calling forth of the Twelve Tribes, at the Delivering of the Law, *Exod.* 19. Thus, the calling forth of the *Athenians*, on Occasion of their publick Transactions, was called a Church, or *Ἐκκλησία*. So the same Word is made Use of, to express the tumultuous Appearance that was made against the Apostles, at *Ephesus*, *Acts* 19. 39, 40.

But then, its ordinary and general Acceptation, in the *New Testament*, is, to express those who are called forth to Sacred and Religious Services: And so, *First*, it denotes the Catholick Universal Church, which is invisible, and consists of the whole Number of the Elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into One, under Christ the Head thereof, *Eph.* 1. 22. *And gave him to be Head over all Things to the Church*. In the same Sense, it is taken, *Eph.* 5. 23, 27, 32. *Christ is the Head of the Church: And he is the Saviour of the Body. That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing. This is a great Mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church*. Thus also, *Mat.* 16. 18. *And upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*. So, *Col.* 1. 18. *And he is the Head of the Body, the Church*. And, *Hebr.* 12. 23. *To the General Assembly and Church of the First-born*. All these,

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these, and the like Scriptures, in the strongest Terms, speak of that Church, which is the Invisible and Mystical Body of Christ, against which the Power and Cunning of infernal Legions shall never prevail. This is such a Notion of the Body of Christ, as is not subject to an external Polity or Government; but is under the special and spiritual Influence of the Holy Ghost, *Rom. 8. 14.* That which is Spiritual and Invisible, can never, under that Notion, be under a Visible and External Jurisdiction.

Secondly, The Word *Church* is used, to express the Visible and Catholick Body of Christ, which consists of all those, throughout the World, that profess the true Religion, together with their Children and Offspring, *1 Cor. 1. 2. & 12. 28.* *To the Church of God which is at Corinth, with all that in every Place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. — And God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers.* Thus also, *Eph. 3. 10.* *That he might make known by the Church, the manifold Wisdom of God.* And, *1 Cor. 10. 32.* *Give no Offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God.* So, *Heb. 2. 12.* *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren, and in the Midst of the Church will I sing Praise unto thee.* And, *1 Tim. 3. 15.* *That thou mayst know how to behave thy self in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the Ground and Pillar of Truth.* Nay, the Children of professing and Christian Parents are to be reputed Members of the Visible Church, *1 Cor. 7. 14. Acts 2. 39. Rom. 11. 16.* From all which 'tis manifest, that there is a Catholick Visible Church in the World, to which Christ, by a Deed of Gift, gave *Apostles, Prophets and Teachers, &c.* with an external Polity or Go-

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vernment. But, as there is a Catholick Church Visible spoken of in Scripture; so, Particular Visible Churches, denominate from some remarkable City, such as that of *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 1. *Ephesus*, *Acts* 20. 17. and all the rest of the Seven Churches of *Asia*, when spoken of separately, *Rev.* 1. 2. These were as Branches or Parts of the Greater Body: And there is no Manner of Absurdity, to say, That a single Church is a Body, in respect of its own Members; and yet, at the same Time, but a Member, if it be considered in relation to the Catholick Body of Professing Christians, or such as acknowledge the true Religion throughout the whole Earth. From this extensive and beautiful View of the Redeemer's House, it is easy to perceive the Import and Meaning of the Word *Church*, when taken in a Religious and Sacred Sense: It either denotes that vast Multitude of Redeemed Ones, which no Man can Number, that are Chosen, and in due Time effectually called forth from a State of Nature, and the Government of a cunning Tempter, to the Kingdom of God's Grace here, and Immortal Glory hereafter, by the conquering Power of the Divine Spirit; or all those who are dispersed throughout the Earth, and by the external Call of the Word, make Profession of the true Religion, subject themselves to Ordinances, and the Laws of Christ's House. In this large Sense, the Word *Church* is no less taken, than for a particular Flock of professing Christians, in any of the remarkable Cities of the *Roman* Empire, as is manifest from the several Scriptures already mentioned.

Thirdly, The Word *Church* is made Use of in the Sacred Oracles to express the *Pastors* and *Rulers* of the Visible Body of Christ, who are peculiarly called forth to Rule and Govern the Redeemer's Flock,

Flock, or Professors of the True Religion, by Assembling themselves together into an Ecclesiastical Judicatory, and there jointly exercising Acts of Jurisdiction over them. In this Sense the Word Church is taken, *Matth. 18. 17. Tell the Church.* Agreeably to this Sense, the *Hebrew* Words GNE-DAH and KAHAL, which are so frequently translated *Church*, by the *Seventy Interpreters*, are made Use of also to express the *Jewish Sanhedrim*, as is observed by the famous *Selden*, De Synedr. Lib. 1. Cap. 9. By *Drusius*, on *Lev. 4. 13.* And *Cameron*, on *Psalms 82. 1.* And indeed, the Church spoken of by our Lord, in this Place, is taken in the Sense now mentioned, by the Generality both of ancient and modern Writers; and was never opposed till the Time of *Morellius* and *Erastus*; and then by the *Brownists*, *Anabaptists*; and then, as their Product, at last, by the *Independents*. That our Lord here speaks with an Allusion to the *Jewish Church*, is undeniable from these Words, *Let him be unto thee as a Heathen and Publican*; and, that he designed a standing Rule for the Christian Church, in all Time coming, is no less evident, from what he subjoins, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, &c.* He that inclines to see a Cloud of Witnesses, both ancient and modern, all agreeing in this Sense of the Text, together with solid Reasons for the establishing thereof, may consult the Learned Mr. *Rutherford*, *Peaceable Plea*, Chap. 8. *Due Right of Presbyteries*, Chap. 1, & 10. But, because there are some sprung forth in our Day, who are set to revive the *Old Libertine* and *Independent* Notions of Church Government, I shall offer a Consideration or two, for vindicating the received Meaning of this Text. And,

1. The Scope of our Lord, in these Words, is not, barely to give us a Rule for the removing of private Offences, but to establish a Church Consistory, for taking away all Scandals and Offences that may fall out in the Christian Church, whether they be more private, between Brother and Brother, or such as are more open and publick, between Church and Church. And indeed, if the Words were not to be taken in this extensive Meaning, as they could not be a Warrant for Excommunication, on the Account of gross and openly scandalous Sins, so they should be narrowed beyond what our Lord designed, when he subjoins, as an Encouragement to his Servants, in general Terms, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* For tho' it be said, *If thy Brother offend thee,* in the singular Number; yet our Lord's Rule is taken from the Less to the Greater; and so, if Six Brethren in one Congregation, offend against one in the same Congregation; or one or moe in one Congregation, against one or moe in a neighbouring Congregation; the general Promises and Encouragements that are annex'd (a), are still a sufficient Warrant for the taking the same Method for the Removal of these Offences. And this, at first View, gives us to understand, That we are not barely to consider *Telling the Church,* for the Eldership of one single Congregation, but all *Presbyteries, Synods or National Assemblies,* according to the Nature of the Offence and Scandal, its being more private and close, or more open and publick. For it is a certain Case, if there be an Offence of one Sister Church against another, or one or moe of her Members,

(a) Matthew 18. 20.

bers, against one or moe of a neighbouring Church, the Thing, in its own Nature, declares, That a Congregational Eldership bears no Proportion, or is not able to determine the Cause, and put Christ's Rule in Execution; and therefore, a Synod made up of several particular Churches, or larger Assembly only, can be the Church that is to be informed, on these or the like publick Occurrences. Unless this Rule be taken in such a Catholick and extensive Meaning, it could never prove a Remedy for all the Diseases and frequent Emergents of the Christian Church. And that which serves to confirm this Sense of the Text, and give it further Light, is, That as our Lord had an Eye to the Good of the Christian Church, and was concerned to have Scandals and Offences removed, that should from Time to Time fall out, and the Obstinate cut off from the Assembly of his People; so, there can be nothing more manifest, than, that he has a plain Allusion to the *Jewish Synagogues* and *Sanhedrim*, which his Hearers were well acquainted with, these being Courts in Use among them by Divine Institution; and, without this Consideration, it is not easy to perceive, how his Apostles, or others present, could have framed a Notion what our Lord meant, there being no Christian Church then actually established. On this Account, the learned *Beza* says, Who would understand Christ here to speak of a Christian Presbytery, that has the Power of Excommunication, except we consider that he had a Respect, in this Form of Speech, to the *Jewish Church Polity*? The same Author expressly maintains, there was both a *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical Sanhedrim* among the *Jews*: And with him agrees *Arias Montanus*, *Tremellius*, *Aquinas*, *Paræus*, *Musculus*, *Austin*, *Cyprian*, *Jerom*, the Council

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of *Ancyra*, *Ambrose*, the *Æthiopick Interpreter*, *Boderian*, with many others, both Protestant and Popish Writers, mentioned by the forecited Mr. *Rutherford*, that by *Church*, we are to understand an Ecclesiastick Senate. But here, for clearing this Point more fully, these three Things would be more particularly consider'd, 1. That the *Jewish Synagogue* was a Court purely Ecclesiastical. 2. That there was an *Ecclesiastick Sanhedrim*, superior to the Synagogues, to which they were subjected. 3. That Excommunication is an Ecclesiastical, and not Civil Censure and Punishment.

1. The *Decemvirate*, as they are termed by the *Jewish* Antiquaries, were a Representative Body of the Synagogue. And it is agreed by most, if not all our Writers on the *Jewish* Customs, such as *Selden*, *Buxtorff*, *Lightfoot*, &c. that they were not confined to be of the Sacerdotal Order, but of any Tribe whatsoever; he that was a Man of Learning, was admitted to the *Decemvirate*, and Administration of the Affairs of the Synagogue, after he was first ordained by the Imposition of Hands; which was an usual Rite in the setting apart all the Members of that Judicatory. This Consistory, or peculiar Bench of the Synagogue, was wholly distinct from the Civil Judicatory of the Place; And whatever was their precise Number, they had only the Care of Religious Matters, and what pertained to Divine Worship. That there were a Plurality of Rulers in the Synagogue, is manifest from *Acts* 13. 15. where it is said, *The Rulers of the Synagogue sent to Paul and Barnabas, after the reading of the Law, that if they had any Word of Exhortation, they should speak on.* The *Jewish* Writers extend this Number to Ten, from whence they are called the *Decemviri*; and the

the learned Dr. *Stillingsfleet* (a) quotes a Passage from *Maimonides*, wherein he says, There were Ten required in any City where there was a Synagogue, distinct from the *Sanhedrim* of the Twenty three; and expressly declares, they were only Versant in Things Divine, and of a religious Concern. He observes in the same Place, That after all Civil Power and Government was taken from the *Jews*, yet still they retained their Arch-synagogues; and he condescends particularly, they were in Being in the Time of *Arcadius* and *Honorius*. This is further manifest from the Particular Form of Ordination, that was used in setting apart these Rulers, by which they were only empower'd to judge *in foro Conscientiæ*, of the Lawfulness and Unlawfulness of Things brought before them. This was called by them, *Facultas discernendi circa ligatum & solutum*, that is, *A Power of Discerning about Binding and Loosing*; or, as some render it, what was *Lawful or Unlawful*. By all which, it seems evident, that Persons ordain'd in this Form, had no Title to exercise Jurisdiction in Matters purely Civil, or what related to the Common-wealth, as such. And it is to be observed, That our Lord puts a Difference, and distinguishes between the Synagogal Courts, and these of Judgment, in the Cities, and calls the one *Councils*, and the other *Synagogues*, *Matth.* 10. 17. Besides, he that presided in the Synagogue, was call'd the *Chief Ruler* of the Synagogue, *Acts* 18. 8, 17. And the rest who joined with them, The Rulers of the Synagogue, *Acts* 13. 15. But as for the Members of their Civil Courts, they are never called by these Names, but only *Judges*. This much, at present, is sufficient, and what may serve for a further Confirmation there-

(a) *Ire. A. on, Page 245.*

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thereof, particularly, That the Power of Excommunication belonged to the Rulers of the Synagogue, will afterwards fall in.

2. That this was not the only Ecclesiastical and Representative Court among the *Jews*, to which the Power of *Binding* and *Loosing* did belong, is the Judgment of many Learned and able Divines, whose Skill in the *Jewish* Constitution was equal to many. And I cannot help thinking, there is a sufficient Foundation for supporting this Way of thinking, from the Sacred Oracles, or *Old Testament* Writings. This seems to be pointed forth to us by *Nehem. 8. 13.* *On the second Day were gathered together the Chief of the Fathers of all the People, the Priests and the Levites, unto Ezra the Scribe, even to understand the Words of the Law, &c.* Ezra was a very holy, no less than Learned Man, and exquisitely skill'd in the Knowledge of the Scriptures; and therefore he is said to have been a *very ready Scribe in the Law of God*, *Ezra 7. 12.* Now, for carrying on the Reformation of that Church, after the Model of the Law of *Moses*, there was an Assembly of Doctors that met with *Ezra*, were assisting to him, and which are called, by several Learned Writers, the *Great Synagogue*, of which the Judicious Mr. *Gillespie* speaks at Length, *Aaron's Rod*, P. 4. 5, 137, 146. And the famous *Selden* speaking hereof, gives an Account from the *Gemara of Jerusalem*, that there were *Centum & viginti Presbyteri, e quibus octoginta Prophetæ fuere, aut instar Prophetarum, banc precandi formulam instituerunt*, An hundred and twenty Elders, of which there were Eighty Prophets, or such as were accounted Prophets, who instituted this Form of Prayer. Here it is observable, That the Members of this Assembly were Elders; and it is not
easy

easy to conceive, That *Ezra*, *Zerubbabel*, *Haggai*, *Zechariah* and *Malachi*, would have given Way to any such Ecclesiastical *Sanhedrim*, if there had not been a Foundation for it in the first *Jewish* Constitution. And another *Jewish* Writer (a), when speaking of the *Masora*, says, *Rectius est originem ejus ad viros Synagogæ, seu Consistorii magni, cujus Preses Ezra Sacerdos, legis divini peritissimus, Ezra 7. 6. Symmystæ & Synergoi, Haggeus, Zacharias, Malachias, Nehemias, Zorobabel, Sacerdos Jehoshua, alique Primarii Sacerdotes & Levitæ, Ducis Zorobabelis ex Babylonia comites, numero centum viginti reducere, Ez. 7. 10. & hæc communis Hebræorum est sententia.* It is more proper to reckon it had its Beginning from the Members of the Great Synagogue, of which *Ezra* the Priest was Preses, one thoroughly skill'd in the Divine Law, whose Colleagues or Co-workers, were *Haggai*, *Zechariah*, *Malachi*, *Nehemiah*, *Zorobabel*, *Joshua* the Priest, and other principal Priests and *Levites*, who came up together with *Zerubbabel* from *Babylon*, being in Number 120. And this is the receiv'd Opinion of the *Jews*. Thus the *Masora* being, according to *Buxtorff*, a Critical Doctrine upon the *Hebrew* Text, invented by the antient *Jewish* Doctors, whereby they have counted the Verses, Words, and Letters of the Text, and observ'd all the Diversities of them, the better to preserve the true Reading from all Manner of Change: It clearly points forth the Nature of this Court, who began and carried on this Laborious Work, and says in the strongest Terms, it was Ecclesiastical. This Composure is called by the *Jewish* Rabbins, the *Pirke Avoth*, the Hedge or Inclosure of the Law; And

(a) Salom. Glossius Phil Sacr. Lib. 1. Tract. 1. Pag. 15, 27.

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And in the fourth Chapter thereof, there is a remarkable Difference put between the Ecclesiastical and Civil Government that obtained in that Kingdom, from the Representation made by a Triple Crown: For, in *Sect. 13.* of that Chapter, it is said, *tres sunt coronæ, corona legis, sacerdotii, & regni*, there are three Crowns, that of the Law, the Priesthood and the Kingdom. And in *C. 6. Sect. 5.* *major est lex sacerdotio aut regno*, the Law is greater than the Priesthood or the Kingdom. And *Philo* expressly says, *Moses* divided the Civil and Ecclesiastical Administration (a). This much is sufficient to establish, that there was an Ecclesiastical *Sankedrim* in the Days of *Ezra*.

But if we shall ascend a little higher, it will appear there was a manifest Difference between the two Supreme Judicatories that were in Use among the *Jews*, in the Days of *Jehoshaphat*. For, *2 Chro. 19. 8.* it is said, *Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites and of the Priests, and of the Chief of the Fathers of Israel, for the Judgment of the Lord*, that is, for all Ecclesiastical Causes. Again, *he set of the Levites, of the Priests, and of the Fathers of Israel, for Controversies*, that is, for all Civil Causes or Matters in the several Tribes of *Israel*. This Distinction seems plainly to be supported from the 12th Verse, *And behold Amariah the Chief Priest is over you in all Matters of the Lord; and Zebadiah the Ruler of the House of Judah, for all the Kings Matters*. Now here were two distinct Judicatories, if distinct Presidents, and different Matters, which were to be determined by them, *Matters of the Lord*, and *Matters of the King*, be capable to denominate them to be such. And one would reasonably think, That where there is an express Mention of

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of the Christian Church. 61

Amariah the Chief Priest, set over the Priests and Levites, to determine the Matters of the Lord, and *Zebadiab*, who must be understood to have been set over others of these, for determining the Matters of the King, or Civil Controversies, it leaves no Room to doubt, there were, then, Two distinct Courts at *Jerusalem*, the One Civil, and the Other Ecclesiastical, call them by what Names any shall please.

But if we shall yet go a little higher, to the Times of *Moses*, we shall find the Parallel of this Text in *Deut. 17*. From which Place, 'tis the Observation of many learned Divines, That there were two supreme Judicatories to be set up, in that Place where the Lord should choose to put his Name; the One made up of Priests and Levites; and the other of Judges: *And thou shalt come unto the Priests, the Levites, and unto the Judge, that shall be in those Days, and enquire.* To these Courts, all the inferior Judges, in the Cities of the Land, were to refer such Causes as were too hard for them, and to submit to their Judgment, under Pain of Death, *Ver. 8, 9, 10, 11*. It is added, *Ver. 12. The Man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the Priest (that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God) or unto the Judge, even that Man shall die.* Here it is to be observed, that the Disjunctive Particle *O R*, distinguishes the Judges from the Priests, or the Court of the Priests from that of the Judges. And tho' it be said *Priest* in the singular Number, or the *Judge*, yet it is said Priests in the 9th Verse; and so, Priest and Judge are to be understood collectively, for the Two Courts of Judicature. And indeed this is no unusual Way of speaking in the Sacred Oracles, as might be shown in several Instances, and particularly, many Cap-
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tains are collectively designed by the Name of *Head*, in the Original *Hebrew*, Deuter. 4. 42. I might here produce a vast Number of Authors, for supporting this Sense of the Words, and expressly holding two distinct *Sanhedrims*, one *Civil*, and another *Ecclesiastick*, under the Old Dispensation; but for Brevity's Sake, I shall refer my Reader to Mr. Gillespie's *Aaron's Rod*, Book 1. Chap. 3. where he will find many learned and experienced *Jewish* Antiquaries all joining in this Head. I shall here present a Passage from Mr. Thomas Goodwyn (a), very express to this Purpose, *The Office of the Ecclesiastick Court was, to put a Difference between Things Holy and Unholy, and between Clean and Unclean, Levit. 10. 10. And to determine Appeals, and Controversies of Difficulty. It was a Representative Court, hence is that, Dic Ecclesiæ, Matth. 18. 17. Because unto them belonged the Power of Excommunication.* As this is a Testimony from no mean Divine in *England*; so I shall give the Judgment of one in *Holland*, namely, the great *Spanheim*, who seems plainly to give Countenance to the Sense given of the last cited Text. His Words are (b), *At de Ordinario Magistratu Sermo, Deut. 16. 18. & 17. 9. Qui ibi nominantur Sacerdotes, in rebus quæ ad cultum Leviticum attinerent; et Judex, vel Judices, qui forent in diebus illis, & de civilibus causis cognoscerent, per singulas Tribus Israelis; immò per singulas Civitates.* From which Words it is observable, that the learned Author distinguishes between the Work and Business of the *Priests*, and that of the *Judges*; the first were only concern'd in the Things that belong'd to the *Levitical* Worship, and the latter, in these Matters that were purely Civil, in the several

veral Tribes and Cities of *Israel*. And tho' it may be objected, That the Matters spoken of, *Deut.* 17. 8. are only *between Blood and Blood, between Plea and Plea, and between Stroke and Stroke*, and requir'd only a Civil *Sanhedrim* for their final Determination; yet it must be considered, that all the Laws of the *Jewish* Constitution being from God, there were, in the Matters to be referr'd, two Things vastly different, and competent to two distinct Courts. In each of these Things, the inferior Courts might be difficulted, as to the *Jus*, or what was the Meaning of the Law, in such a supposed Case, and the Fact alledged, in it self considered, whether proven or not; the Nature of the Punishment due thereunto, and the inflicting thereof. Now, the First might fall under the Consideration of the Priests, and the Meaning of the Law be sought at their Mouth; but the Latter, being a Thing wholly Civil, it was only competent to a Civil *Sanhedrim*, whose Business was to judge in the Matter of Proof and Fact, and execute the Law, in punishing of Criminals. Thus, an inferior Court, tho' Civil, whether it was the *Sanhedrim* of *Three*, or of *Twenty three*, no less than the Synagogue, might, in difficult Matters, refer for Advice to the Supreme Ecclesiastical *Sanhedrim*, as to the Sense and Meaning of the Law; but the Action it self before them, or the Fact or Crime alledged, and Inflicting of the Punishment, in case of Difficulty, was only the Business of the great *Sanhedrim*, which had the final Determination of Things that were of a Civil Nature: And I cannot help thinking, there is some Foundation for this Distinction in the Case of *Jeremiah*, *Jer.* 26. For, the Priests declare him worthy of Death, *Ver.* 8, 9. But, in Fact, the Civil *Sanhedrim*, the Princes of *Judah*,

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Judah, when they had assembled in the Entry of the New Gate of the Lord's House, determine the Contrary, and expressly say, *He was not worthy of Death; for he had spoken in the Name of the Lord their God*, Ver. 10, 16. There is one Thing manifest; he was brought before two Courts; the One declare him guilty, and the Other not; which will not be easy to reconcile, if we shall not construct the first to be *Jure* and the other *Facto*. Besides, the same Action may be, in its own Nature, civil, and subject, as such, to a Civil Court; and yet, the Scandal arising therefrom, is competent only to an Ecclesiastical Judicatory; and so it might be in the present Case: But of this, more under the next Head. But, after all, as there were Matters of Blood, which were to be referred to a Civil *Sanhedrim*; so, there were Matters of Difference that might fall out, that were to be transmitted to their Respective Superiors; and this is sufficient to remove any Objection from the Context. This Distinction, between the Two *Sanhedrims*, is maintain'd by the learned Dr. *Keynolds's Confer. with Hart*. C. 6. Div. 2. Page 203, 204. *Cartwright's First Reply to Dr. Whitgift*, Page 192. See *Reply* Page 152, 153. *Buder. Dissert. de Guber. Eccles.* Page 59, &c. with many Others.

3. This Point, as to the distinct Courts that were among the *Jews*, will further appear from the Consideration of this, namely, That Excommunication or declaring a Person to be as a Heathen Man or a Publican, was a Censure purely *Ecclesiastical*; and consequently, the Deed of an Ecclesiastick Court. This will appear manifest from the Consideration of these Things. And, 1, The Grounds on which this amazing Sentence was denounced, were, not, generally, Matters of a Civil

vil Nature, or, such Things as their Law declar'd to be Capital ; but Offences and Scandals that were given to others, as appears from the twenty four Causes of *Excommunication*, represented from the *Jewish* Writers by Mr. Selden, * namely, *The neglecting of the Precepts of the Scribes : The vain pronouncing of the Name of God : Bearing Witness against a Jew before heathen Tribunals : Doing any common Work in the Afternoon of the Day before the Passover : The casting Reproach on a Publick Minister in the Market-place, &c.* Now, considering, that *Excommunication* was inflicted on Account of Scandals and Offences, and Things that were not of a Capital Nature, it seems plainly to determine it was a Sentence competent to an Ecclesiastical, and not a Civil Court. Altho' some of the Grounds were, in their own Nature, civil ; yet the Censure was not inflicted on Account of the Action or Crime, for a Satisfaction to the Law ; but on Account of the Scandal and Offence that accompanied the Action : And thus, it falls out, in several Cases, at this Day. But, 2. It is further to be consider'd, That Civil Penalties, inflicted by the Magistrate, have no Regard to the Intention of the Mind, or Disposition of the Delinquent, but the Quality and Desert of the Action committed by him. Now, the Sentence of *Excommunication* was not of this Nature ; seeing the Increasing or Abatement of the Censure, depended on the Person's Repentance or Obstinacy. Human or Civil Laws have an immediate Respect unto the Action or Crime committed, and not unto the Disposition of the Mind of the Agent, any further, than so far as it is interested in the Action ; but Ecclesiastical Laws have an immediate Concern in

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* *De Jure Naturæ, Lib. 4. Cap. 8.*

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the Intention of the Mind, and are only concerned in the outward Actions, as they are expressive of the inward Disposition and Temperament of the Soul. For, tho' the Ground and Occasion wherefore an Ecclesiastical Censure is inflicted, is taken from the Observation of some outward Action committed against a Law; yet the End of the Inflicting of the Penalty, being for the Good of the Person, and bringing him under a deep Sense of his Sin, that it may not prove his Ruin, the Relaxation of the Sentence, or Mitigation of the Censure, as to its Degrees, depends on the Frame, Temper or Disposition of the Soul of the Delinquent. Thus, all Ecclesiastical Censures are to be proportioned to the Nature of the Offence, and the Degree of Sorrow and Repentance that appears to be on the Spirit of the Person; so, that the same Offence, in different Persons, is not to be fix'd to the same precise Rule; but the Exercise of Discipline is to bear a Proportion to the Sense and Sorrow that appears to be on the Minds of different Delinquents. But, as this does not hold in Civil Punishments, which have, merely, a Respect to the outward Action, and the Exercise of Justice on the Criminal, without any Eye to Mercy; so, *Excommunication* among the *Jews*, according to the learned *Buxtorff*, was purely Ecclesiastical, and its Design was the Reclaiming of the Delinquent; seeing the lesser Degree thereof remained only Thirty Days, and, on the Person's hearty Confession of his Sin, and Desire of Absolution, it was shortned. And, to give a further View of this Censure, which was called *Niddui*, if the Person continued impenitent after the Thirty Days, the Sentence was to be increased to Sixty,

ty, or one Hundred Days, or all the Time of his Life, if there were no Signs of Repentance about him; and when he died a Stone was laid upon his Coffin or Bier, to intimate he deserv'd to have been ston'd: And, as a Token of their Abhorrence of him, and his being in no better State than a Heathen Man or a Publican, they wept not for him, nor allow'd him the Common Place of Burial. The same learned Author says, if the *Excommunicate* desired not to be absolved, or the Relaxation of the Sentence, it was a second Time denounc'd against him; and, if that was also ineffectual, he was laid under a higher Sentence of *Excommunication*, called *Cherem*; and, in this, he is seconded by *Selden*, * and other *Jewish* Antiquaries. From which View of this Censure, it is easy to perceive, it was Ecclesiastical, and not Civil; its Design was not the Satisfaction of the Law, but the Reclaiming of the Offender; bringing him to a Sense of his Sin, that the Soul might be saved in the Day of the Lord. This makes it clear, that *Excommunication*, under the Old Dispensation was not a mere *Outlawry*, and debarring the Person from Civil Privileges, as the *Erastians* plead, and some, in our Days, seem to favour. 3. It is further to be observed, that it was not the Violation of the Law, or the Transgression of the Statutes of the *Jewish* Polity, but the Publickness of the Offence, and Scandal of the Action, that was the Foundation of *Excommunication*, or declaring Persons to be as *Heathens* and *Publicans*. This is a Demonstration, that it was an Ecclesiastical Censure; seeing all Civil Penalties are inflicted on the Breach of the Law as such; and whether it be Publick or Private, does not, in

* *Ubi supra.*

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the least, alter the Case, or mitigate the Punishment; whereas, the same Offence, which was given in Private, did not infer *Excommunication*, as when it was in Publick, and in the Market-place. Thus, the first Ground of *Excommunication*, mentioned by Mr. *Selden* (a), is an Affront cast on a Wise Man, or Student in the Law, which, if it was in Publick, necessarily inferred the Denunciation of that Sentence, and admitted no Dispensation; whereas, if in Private, the *Rabbi*, or Wise Man, might forgive the Offence, tho' not in the former Case. From this it is manifest, That it was the Scandal arising from the Action, and not the Action it self, that made the Sentence of *Excommunication* necessary; and, that because there was not only a Defamation of the Person, but of the Holy Law. On this Account it is, *John Cocchitus* (b) says, *Publicum doctoris ludibrium in legis contemptum redundat*: The Contempt of the Doctors of the Law redounds to the Dishonour of the Law it self. 4. The Ecclesiastical Nature of *Excommunication*, as it was used among the *Jews*, is further evident from the Form and Tenor in which this Sentence did run. Thus, *Buxtorff* (c) affords us the Tenor of One, out of an Old *Hebrew* Manuscript, which begins, *Ex sententia Domini Dominorum, sit in anathemate Ploni filius Ploni, in utraque domo judicii, superiorum, Sc. & inferiorum, &c.* Here it is worth Notice, That this Sentence must be accounted Sacred, and not Civil, in that it is not only done in the Name and Authority of the Lord of Lords; but secludes the Man, and declares him *Excommunicate*, both in *Heaven* and *Earth*. I find another Form of *Excommunication*, which

(a) *Uni supra.* (b) *Excerpt. Gem. Sanh. Page 146.* (c) *Lexic. Rabbin. Pag. 827. 828.*

which the *Jews* say (*a*), was used by *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* against the *Samaritans*, in this Manner,
 “ They assembled the Whole Congregation, in
 “ the Temple of the Lord, and they brought
 “ 300 Priests, 300 Trumpets, and 300 Books
 “ of the Law, and as many Boys, and they
 “ sounded their Trumpets, and the *Levites* singing,
 “ cursed the *Samaritans*, by all the Sorts of Ex-
 “ communication, in the Mystery of the Name
 “ *JEHOVAH*, and in the *Decalogue*, and with
 “ the Curse of the Superior House of Judgment,
 “ and likewise with the Curse of the inferior
 “ House of Judgment; that no *Israelites* should
 “ eat the Bread of the *Samaritans*,” &c. From
 this it is easy to perceive, that not only the Form
 in which the Sentence of *Excommunication* did run,
 was purely Ecclesiastical, but considering, it was
 used against the *Samaritans*, over whom they had
 no Power or Civil Jurisdiction, makes it evident
 beyond Question, to every unprejudiced Mind,
 that it was not a Punishment inflicted by the Ci-
 vil Magistrate. 5. It is worth Notice, and clearly
 proves, that *Excommunication* was, in all Ages,
 an Ecclesiastick Censure, if we consider the Ef-
 fects that followed thereon, namely, the Excom-
 municates being debarred from Publick Ordinan-
 ces, as is manifest from *Buxtorff*, * and other lear-
 ned *Jewish* Antiquaries. ’Tis owned, that he who
 was only under that Sentence which was called
Niddui, might be present at Publick Worship;
 yet, at the same Time, were not allowed to come
 nearer to an *Israelite*, than ten Cubits; but when
 he was under the Second Degree of that Censure,
 he was wholly debarred from Sacred Society. Thus
 the forecited Author says (*b*), that one under *Che-*

(a) Lewis Orig Heb. Vol. 1. P. 85. * Ubi supra. (b) Epist. Institut. P. 56.

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rem, omnino a sacro cœtu secluditur, is wholly excluded from Sacred Society; and this he calls the Casting out of the Synagogue, mentioned *John 9. 22. & 12. 41.*

From all which, it is evident, That, as there was a real Distinction between Things that were in their own Nature Civil, and these that were Ecclesiastical under the Law; so there were different and really distinct Courts, the One for Things Civil, and the Other for these that were Sacred and Religious. And for any to alledge, that *Excommunication* was the Sentence of a Civil Magistrate, overturns the very Nature of Things, and confounds Matters, which both are, and ought to be distinguished; and it is no less an Extreme, and in it self ridiculous to maintain, That all Jurisdiction under the Old Testament was Ecclesiastical, as a late Writer asserts, but without any Proof. So from the Whole, we may conclude, That, as our Lord had an Eye to the *Jewish Synagogue* and *Sanhedrim*, in the giving forth of that Rule, **TELL THE CHURCH**; so, they were both Courts of an Ecclesiastick Constitution, which render'd the Form of Speech, made Use of on that Occasion, to be easily perceived, and readily understood, by all his Hearers; which, otherwise, cou'd not have been, there being no Christian Church, at that Time, formally constitute, distinct from the *Jewish* Polity. This, in it self, was sufficient to determine the Meaning of *Tell the Church*, against all that the Independents can bring against it. But,

2. It will be proper, next to consider, for the clearing thereof, to whom it was, that the Power of *Binding* and *Loosing*, was committed. This will be more fully spoken to afterwards; only here let it

it be minded, that this Power is to be taken for a Moral Right of Governing or Ordering Things which belong to a Sacred Society. And so it only implies a Moral Faculty in the Persons possessed of it, to take Care, lest any Hurt or Detriment should befall the Church of Christ. Thus, from the Nature of the Society, 'tis easy to perceive, that this Power is neither *Coercive*, nor merely *Arbitrary*, arising from Consent, as some plead; but such as is by Positive and *Divine Institution*, which supposes a Consent to submit to it, in Point of Duty, and in Obedience to God's Command, in all those that become Members of that Sacred Body. For the Christian Church being the Institution of Christ, it must be regulated and govern'd by his own Laws; and the Power he bestows for this End, must be still exercised in an Agreeableness thereto; and its Members, tho' their Consent is necessarily supposed; yet it is a Duty in them, and arises from the Divine Authority. From this it is easy to perceive, that the Power of Rule and Government, which is bestowed by Christ, for the Good of his Church, is such as depends on him as the Source thereof, and his giving a Right to govern, to particular Persons, over such a Society, makes it the Duty of all its Members, to submit thereunto; and there is no other Penalty can be inflicted on their Contempt or Contumacy, but Exclusion of such from the Privileges peculiar thereto. So, on the very Supposition, of such a Society as the Christian Church is, that it is of Divine Institution, and its Adorable Head has appointed Officers therein, for the Rule and Government thereof, it must necessarily follow, that these Officers do not Derive their Power from the Consent or Confederation of the Members, but the Institu-

tion on which this Sacred Society depends. Thus, as all *Power in Heaven and in Earth* is given to Christ; so he model'd the *New Testament* Constitution, according to his own Infinite Counsel, which, at once, looks *Erastian* and *Independent* Notions out of Countenance. For, the Ministerial Powers, by Virtue of this positive Institution, are immediately from Christ. 1. By an Immediateness of Donation, or Deed of Gift from him to his own Officers; so that they were not first and Immediately given to the Body of the Faithful, and then by them, secondarily and mediately to the Officers, as their Delegates and Substitutes. 2. By a Priority and Immediateness of Designation of particular and Individual Persons, to the Office and Exercise of this Moral Power, which is effectuate by the Intervention and Act of Church-officers, when they set them apart to that Holy Function, which Christ instituted. Thus it is observable, Christ gave *some to be Apostles for the Church*, &c. but not, to the Church, as if the Power of Ordaining Officers were lodged in them, and the fundamental Right of all Acts of Government. And indeed, the Source of this popular Mistake seems to have been, That some, from the Consideration of this Moral Power's being given for the Good of the Church, therefore, its common Subject, in which it resides, must be the Universal or Catholick Body of Christ, from whence it must flow, unto the Guides and Rulers of his House. But the Institution of Christ affords us no Foundation for such a Conceit, nor leaves us the least Room to gather any such shifting of the Keys from Hand to Hand, this being expressly provided otherwise, in the Constitution he has set up under the *New Testament*. 'Tis true, that some learned Divines have been of the Judgment, that this

this Power was, as to its fundamental Right, or in *actu primo*, as they call it, in the Universal Church of Christ; but as to its Exercise, in *Actu secundo*, it belongs only to the Rulers of the Redeemer's House. But by all I can learn from these learned Writers, their Meaning only is, That there is in the Body of the Church, or Professors of Christianity, a popular Power of making Choice of their own Pastors, which is not Authoritative; for they expressly refuse the Body of the People to have the Moral Power of Ordination and Government. This they maintain, is only lodged in the Community of Church-Rulers, it not being committed to a single Person, but to be exercised by a Plurality, in One Class or Ecclesiastical Judicatory. And indeed, it is a Thing wholly unheard of, for a single Person to be called a Church, to whom the Delation of any Offence should be made. Thus, the Difference between *what we* maintain, as to the Power of Rule and Government, its being immediately, from Christ, and not from the Body of the People, committed to Church Rulers, and those who maintain a Fundamental Right to be in the Catholick Church, is not so very great; seeing they agree with us, That the Exercise of Jurisdiction is immediately from the Institution of Christ. But to me it seems a plain Case, That if the Exercise of the Moral Power of Government, be immediately from the Positive Institution of Christ, and the Investiture thereof made by Persons in Office, it cannot, in any Propriety of Speech, be said to be in the Body of the Faithful, either in Name or Thing; for I cannot see how Persons can be said to have a Power, which they cannot exercise or reduce into Act. The Independents grand Mistake seems to ly in this, namely, their confounding

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ding the Power of Election with that of Jurisdiction, and making the former to be an Authoritative Deed; whereas, they are never able, from the positive Institution of Christ, to make it any more than a Private and Popular Act. Nor is there any Foundation, from what the University of *Paris* maintain'd at, and after the Time of the Council of *Basil* and *Constance*, for the Support of their Notion; seeing they understood, as the immediate Subject of the Keys, the Universal Catholick Church, not of Believers, but a General Council or Representative Church, made up of all those whom Christ had empower'd to join in the Exercise of Rule and Government, in Opposition to the Universal Power of the Bishop of *Rome*. This much, in the General, might suffice to let every Unprejudiced Person see, what we are to understand by the Church which our Lord directs us to inform; but that we may remove any Mistake on this Head, we shall more particularly make it appear, that by the positive Institution of Christ, the Moral Power of the Keys was actually committed to Church-Rulers, and not unto the Body of Professors, or the truly Faithful. And,

First, The Power of the Keys was bestowed on the Apostles, and they were the only Persons, at the Time our Lord deliver'd that Rule, *Matth. 18. 17.* that were empower'd to exercise any Rule and Government, *Matth. 16. 19. I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven.* Now, this Deed of Gift was unto *Peter*, and, in him, to all the Rest of the Apostles, or others that were in Office, to whom he says, *John 20. 23. Whose Sins ye forgive, they are forgiven, and whose Sins ye retain, they are retained.* This is the same with Binding

ding and Loofing, which is a Demonstration, that this Power was equally beftow'd on all the Apoftles; feeing they were the Persons to whom he faid, *As my Father sent me, fo I fend you*, and after his Refurrection, *All Power is given to me in Heaven and in Earth, go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, &c.* By this it is manifelt, That the Power of the Keys being made over unto the Apoftles, it muft undeniably point forth fome Adminiftration in the Church, which doth refpect it as a Vifible Society, in which Senfe it is called the *Kingdom of Heaven*. And that which feems primarily to be intended by the Keys, in this Place, is the Power of Admiffion into the Church of Chrift, in order to the Pardon of the Sins, and Acceptance of all true Penitents, and confequently, the fhutting out of fuch, as were manifeltly unworthy of being Members of that Sacred Society. Thus, the Apoftles, being invefted with a Power from Chrift, to judge of the Fitefs of Persons, in order to their being admitted Members of Chrift's Kingdom, and fecluding others therefrom, on their Contumacy and obftinate Behaviour therein, it fays in the ftrongeft Terms, This Power was not immediately committed to the Body of the Faithful, or Profefling Chriftians. For, it being committed to them, before any Chriftian Church was actually formed, which, properly, was not till after the Refurrection of Chrift, when they were clothed with their full Powers, it makes it evident to a Demonstration, That they were not beftow'd on a Church not yet formally in Being. It is not eafily to be perceived, how the Keys could be committed immediately to the Apoftles, which had a Refpect to the Admiffion of Persons into the Church, no lefs than fecluding unworthy Members from its Privileges; and

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and yet, at the same Time, to the Body of the Faithful, which they were impowered to gather together, and form into Churches. That which naturally arises from the whole, is, That the Power of the Church doth not arise from mere *Consent* or *Confederation*, it being manifest, that the Power of the Keys was made over to the Rulers thereof by Divine Institution, and had a Respect unto the Admission of Persons into that Sacred Society, and consequently, those who gave Consent to the Terms of the Gospel, and Profession of the true Religion, were Antecedently bound thereunto by Divine Authority. He that joins himself to the **Christian Church**, and consents to the Religion of Christ, he is bound to it by the Antecedent Authority of him who Institute that Constitution; and his actual joyning himself to be a Member of that Sacred Body, lays him under the strongest Obligations to be subject to its Rulers, who are impowered to exercise Discipline on Offenders, and govern the whole Body. Thus it is evident, as any Thing can be, That the Moral Power of Binding and Loosing, is not from the Body of Christians assembled together by mutual Consent; but from Christ, who made it over to his Apostles by Deed of Gift, and, in them, to their Successors in their ordinary Powers, unless we shall suppose a Christian Church formally Planted before there was one, and overturn the Positive Institution of Christ.

Secondly, That which I shall next add, is, That there is no Foundation for any to alledge, that the Power of the Keys was given to *Peter*, in Name of all Believers. For, not to insist on what hath been already said, 'tis manifest, the receiving of publick Delations of Scandals, and inflicting of Censures, are no where, in Scripture, ascribed to any,

any, but the Office-bearers of the Church, *John* 20. 21, 22, 23. *1 Tim.* 5. 1, 19. *Titus* 3. 15. *1 Thes.* 5. 12. *1 Pet.* 5. 1, 2, 3. *Heb.* 13. 7, 17, &c. Thus then, there is no Ground for any to say, That what was spoken to *Peter*, was in Name of all Believers, but in Name of the Apostles and Office-bearers in the Church. For, on Supposition it were so, it would undeniably follow, That the Power of the Keys was given to Believers as such, and to none but these; seeing the Church spoken of, *Matth.* 16. 18. is that which is built on the *Rock Christ*, and against which the *Gates of Hell* cannot prevail. But this would prove more than what the *Independents* will allow of, it being their generally receiv'd Principle, That they belong to a Single Church, associate in a Visible Profession, and Meeting together in one Place, for publick Worship; whereas, this makes the Power of the Keys to be given to all Believers in the Catholick Church, and to them as such, not unto any particular Number of them assembled together, under a Church Covenant, of which there is not the smallest Intimation in the Context, nor could there be, seeing there was no Christian Congregation at that Time, formally in Being, distinct from the *Jewish* Constitution. Besides, all those who are built on the *Rock Christ*, and against which the *Gates of Hell* shall not prevail, being all true Believers, the making them the immediate Subject of the Keys, would infallibly establish, That unbelieving Pastors were no Pastors, and all Ministerial Acts performed by them void and null; the fatal Consequences of which must be obvious. Nay, suppose Seven or Eight in an *Independent* Congregation, which Number they allow to make up One, and that they excommunicate a Person on just Grounds; yet,

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yet, for all this, he may not be excommunicate, or bound in Heaven, unless it were certain, that these who passed the Sentence were true Believers; whereas it may fall out otherwise. So, at this Rate, when a Person is excommunicate, none are to abstract from him on that Account, or deny him free Access to their Company, or religious Fellowship, unless they were assured, that these who laid him under that amazing Sentence, were really in Christ by Faith; and thus, there is an End of any good Effects arising from that Institution. But if it shall be said, That the Keys are given to a Profession of Christianity, tho' it may fall out not to be true and genuine; then they are not given to Believers as such, or those who are built on Christ by Faith, and against whom *the Gates of Hell shall not prevail*; and so, the Argument is fallen, taken from their being given to *Peter*, as Representative of the Redeemed of Christ, or Believers in him. The Profession made by *Peter* was truly believing, and, if the Keys were only given to such as make the like Confession of Christ, as this will still give them to be the Right of Believers; so it will lodge them in the Hands of every believing Woman or Child, all without Exception, that can from the Heart say, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God*. In a Word, if the Moral Power of Binding and Loosing, had been given to real Confessors as such, by the Apostles; then the Ministry of any of those Churches planted by them, should have been as inviolably secured from Defection and Apostasy, as the Elect themselves, against whom *the Gates of Hell cannot prevail*; whereas, the Contrary is manifest. For it will not easily be reconciled with the Apostles express Declaration to the Church of *Ephesus*, that *Of themselves*

selves Men should rise up, speaking perverse Things, to draw away Disciples after them. And if it shall be alledged, that these to whom the Keys were committed in the first Christian Churches, were not all Believers, otherwise it had not fared so with them as it did; then it will bring the Blame on the Blessed Apostles, that admitted such to the Visible Profession of Christ, as they were not positively assured, were unfeigned Confessors.

After all, that the Keys were made over to *Peter*, and in him, to all that should be built on the Rock, is neither expressly, nor by the remotest Consequence, in the Text. And it is no less without Scripture Foundation, that they were given to a Company of Professing Christians, associate in one single Congregation; seeing the Church spoken of was none else, but the Catholic Invisible Body of Christ, which alone, is inviolably bottomed on the Rock of Ages, and as such, hath no external Polity and Government. Thus, it is easy to perceive, what we are to understand by the Church spoken of by our Lord, and which was to be informed, on the Obstinacy of the Offender, namely, the Church of the Apostles, and consequently, their Ordinary Successors, in after Times, when Christian Churches were planted, and their Constitution formally made up. This is manifestly pointed at by Christ, *Matth. 18. 18.* For, after he had spoken of the Church which was to be informed, he immediately addresses himself to those whom he had spoken to in the first Verse, namely, his Disciples, *Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, &c.*

This much may serve to vindicate the Meaning of the Text, *Tell the Church.* And all I shall add further

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further on this Head, is, That the Word *Church* may be safely taken in the same Sense, *Acts* 18. 22. & 15. 22. The last of these will be more fully considered afterwards; and as to the First, the Series of the History may serve to clear its Meaning. It is said, *Paul* landed at *Cesarea*, and went up and *saluted the Church*. Now, by the Church, we cannot reasonably understand the Body of Believers in *Jerusalem*, that were at that Time so vastly numerous (a); but only the chief Members and Rulers thereof, this being only a passing Visit, without any Stay. And the Tenor of the Words seem to make it very short; for it is only said, When he had landed at *Cesarea* and gone up and *saluted the Church*, he went down to *Antioch*. Is it to be believed, the Apostle saluted every Member, or the Body of Christians at *Jerusalem*? or, are we to force a Meaning upon the Text, which it seems not easily to bear; especially, when in the strongest Terms, it may be literally true, as to the Rulers and Ministers of that Church. Thus then, when the Words admit of a plain and easy Meaning, it is hard to obtrude upon them a Sense, which is not so plain and obvious, unless it could be made evident to a Demonstration, that they could have all conven'd in one particular Place, where he could have seen and actually conversed with them; which is more than difficult to make good.

SECT.

(a) *Acts* 21. 20.

S E C T. II.

Remarks upon a late Pamphlet, intituled, An Explication of Mr. Glass's Proposition, &c. in so far as it contains the Arguments of Independents against what hath been advanced in the preceeding Section.

SINCE the Writing out of the most of these Sheets, there is published, a Pamphlet, intituled, *An Explication of Mr. Glass's Proposition, &c.* I do not propose to take any further Notice of this Performance, than in so far as it opposes what I had formerly laid down, before it came to my Hands, and hope, have established from Scripture and Reason; and, in doing of this, I shall add my Remarks and Answers under the several Heads, where they most naturally fall in. Nor shall I make any Reflections on the Spirit and Genius of the Writ it self, or be inquisitive as to its Author, seeing he has not prefix'd his Name. All I shall say, is, That I see nothing New in the Performance; the Whole being a Repetition of what hath been a hundred Times baff'd by many learned and able Hands. And indeed, this Author is so far from giving any Advantage to the *Independent* Arguments, that in many Things they are obscur'd, and tweezed up to a downright Mysticism; and had it not been, that this Controversy, which has been, for a long Time, dead, (and, one would have thought, for ever buried in this Church) is now raised again, to its Disturbance, I should not have troubled the World with any Observes on this Subject.

Now, what this Author maintains under this Head, is, That the Names *Church* and *Congregation*

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tion, are Reciprocal Terms, Pag. 5, 6. *The Words Church and Congregation, are made of the same Import--.* *The Word Church, when it is used in Scripture, to signify any other Thing than a Christian Congregation, it yet signifies a Congregation, &c.* *This Word is ordinarily apply'd, in Scripture, to a more sacred Use; and then indeed, it sometimes signifies the Body assembling, and sometimes the Assembly of that Body; but still a Congregation.* For Proof of this, he brings 1 Cor. 14. 23. & 11. 18, 20. & 14. 34, 35. He adds, *The whole Nation of Israel was called a Church, Acts 7. 38. But that was a Congregation, and had one Place of Worship.* Now, 1. As to the Scriptures mentioned by our Author, they are fully considered afterwards. 2. If our Author is not acting the Jesuite, he must understand, by *Congregation*, such a competent Number of Christians, as can assemble, for ordinary, in one Place, for Publick Worship, and may be edified by the Preaching of one Pastor at a Time. But will he adventure to say, That the Catholick Church Visible, all the Professors of the true Religion in the World, are but such a Congregation? Will any sober Mind say, That *Congregation*, in the Ordinary Acceptation just now mention'd, and *Church*, are convertible Terms in the *New Testament*; so that every where it may be said, every *Congregation* of Christians is a *Church*, and every *Church* a *Congregation*? Thus it must be, if they be Words of the same Import. I have given many Instances in Scripture, where the Word *Church* is undeniably to be understood of all the Professors of the True Religion, throughout the World; but our Author, after all his Pretence to an impartial Search after the Import of that Word, has not seen it meet, so much as to mention one
of

of these Scriptures. And I cannot help thinking, his Impartiality was afraid to take Notice of these, lest it should have plainly appear'd, That the Word *Church*, was of far greater Extent than that of a Christian *Congregation*. And, at the same Time, it should have made every Ordinary Reader see, That every particular Congregation was but a Member or Branch of that vast Body, that were to *have Care one of another*, and to whom Christ gave Officers, and the Moral Power of Government, in a secondary Way; and primarily, to all the Parts of that Body, considered as one Sacred Society. This extensive View the Apostle gives of the Christian Church, at great Length, 1 Cor. 12. Eph. 4. Rom. 12. would have, at once, look'd the *Independent* Notions out of Countenance. Now, with what Confidence could our Author assert, That he was to make an impartial Search into the Import of the Name *Church*, from the Sacred Oracles, when he has not given us an Account of one Scripture wherein the Catholick Visible Church is mentioned? And I wish, that when he is so very solemn in the Entry, saying, not without an Invective, *Add thou not to his Word, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a Liar*; he had been as concern'd, not to have concealed or taken away from it; seeing the Judgment is no less severe upon the One Hand, than the Other, Rev. 22. 18, 19.

Thirdly, It cannot miss to be surprising to any impartial Considerer, to observe the Sophistical Way our Author takes to obtrude on the Credulous, That the Name *Church* always denotes a *Congregation*, from the Nation of *Israel's* being called a Church, and having one Place of Worship. For, will any candid Reasoner infer from this, That there is no Church under the *New Testament*, but

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what is Congregational, that is, consisting of no more, but these who can conveniently meet in one Place for Publick Worship, and be instructed by the Preaching of a single Pastor at a Time? But, to lay open this Mistake, let these Three Things be considered. 1. That the Nation of the *Jews* was one Congregation, in that it had but one publick and solemn Typical Service and Worship, performed at the *Tabernacle* and *Temple*, and was under the Inspection of one Visible Pastor or Priest, by whom the whole of that Nation were represented, in his publick Appearance in the Offering up of Sacrifices, and Religious Adoration. This was a Constitution that endured for a Time, till the Appearance of Christ in the Flesh, by whom it was abolished, it being purely Legal and Typical, and he having answered all that was designed by it. But of what Service can this be to our Author? For all this was Typical of Christ; but not of Particular Congregations under the *New Testament*; and therefore, his adducing of it, to explain the Notion of the Church under the Gospel, was impertinent and juggling. 2. There is a Notion of a National Church, pretended to by some under the Gospel, in which many particular Churches are subjected unto one Church, and, as the Center of Unity, depend on One Visible Pastor or Metropolitan, of a whole Nation or Kingdom. This is a Government purely Monarchical, and permitteth not a Congregation to have any Share in Government, but Robs them of their particular Elderships; which, as is own'd by *Parker*, * Presbyterian Government doth not. *It is one Thing for a Congregation to subject themselves to a Bishop and Consistory, wherein they shall have no Power of Suffrage;*

* De Polit. Eccles. Page 358.

frage; and another Thing to communicate with such a Presbytery, wherein themselves are Members and Judges with others. This Kind of Government or National Church, neither is, nor ever was of Divine Institution, it being such a Constitution, as deprives all the smaller Churches and Pastors of exercising any Power or Authority, or that which was granted them by a Deed of Gift from Christ. But, 3. There is a National Church, in which there are many particular Churches united together, in the Unity of one Visible Church Government, wherein all the Pastors and Rulers of these several Churches are equally concern'd, without any Paramount Power of any one Church, or the Rulers thereof, over another. This we say, is neither Typical or Legal; but *perpetui juris*, or Moral, and was institute by God under the *Old Testament*, for the Exercise of Discipline and Jurisdiction. For there was, under the first Dispensation, many particular Churches or Synagogues, in the Land of *Canaan*; and, in *Jerusalem* itself, there is said to have been Four hundred and eighty: In all these the Moral Worship of God, the Preaching of the Word, and Prayers, and the Exercise of Discipline and Government was performed, as has been already proven, and is manifest, from *Acts* 15. 21. & 13. 15, 16. *Luke* 21. 12. *John* 12. 42. Besides, all these Synagogues were united, and under one national and visible Ecclesiastical Government. These we say, were not Typical or Legal, but Moral, as to their Essence and Nature, and never abolished. Now, every impartial Person would have expected, that our Author should have been so candid, as to have inform'd his Reader, that the Nation of the *Jews* was one Church, and yet had many Hundreds of Congregations in her, which were united

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in one Ecclesiastical Government; or, at least, given Satisfaction to the World, by shewing, That all this was purely Typical, and abolished by Christ; which will be more than difficult for him or any *Independent* to make good. In this Sense it is, we plead for a National Church under the *New Testament*; and in so doing, there are the clearest Grounds to carry us out against all that the Adversaries of the Truth can bring against us. It is not Words, or noisy Clamours, that will drive us from our Principles, but Scripture and solid Reasons.

He adds, *Page 6. But the Proposition plainly speaks of a particular Church of Christ, wherein this General Assembly is some Way Visible, such as the Church in Jerusalem, the Church of Antioch, the Church of Ephesus, &c. If these Churches appear to have been no more but Congregations, or Companies assembling together in one Place, it will then be manifest, that throughout the Word of God, the Word Church, in this Matter, is of the same Use as in the Proposition; and if this appear to have been the Case in Jerusalem, there will be no great Ground of needful Dispute about the rest.* Such a Wrangle cannot miss to be amazing to every judicious Christian. For, 1. It is but trifling to speak of the Church in the singular Number, as if this was always but one single Congregation. For, according to this Way of Reasoning, when our Lord says, *Upon this Rock I will build my Church*, and the Apostle, *And he hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, &c.* and, *The Church the Ground and Pillar of Truth*, they only speak of a single Congregation, which, for ordinary, meets, in one Place, for Publick Worship. But every intelligent Person will, at first View, perceive, That all these Scriptures, and many more, expressly speak of the whole Catholick Church, and
not

not of a particular Christian Congregation. Thus, let any impartial Judge consider, how much Truth there is in our Author's Assertion, that *throughout the Word of God, the Word Church is of the same Use as in the Proposition*, that is, a single Congregation. I persuade my self, that no Man, but such a Logician as our Author, would ever have drawn such a Conclusion, as he does, in this Place, namely, If the Church in *Jerusalem*, of *Antioch*, and *Ephesus*, &c. appear to have been no more but Congregations, it will then be manifest, that *throughout the Word of God, the Word Church is of the same Use as in the Proposition*, that is, for a Congregation. But, if our Author shall alledge, that these Words, in this Matter, restricts his Meaning to a particular Church, then the Question returns, How he comes to neglect the Catholick Visible Church, from being of any Consideration in the New Testament, or not enquire into its Import, when treating on that Subject, and professes to make an impartial Search into the Import of the Word *Church*? After all, upon this Supposition, the Argument is such a Piece of Mysticism, that it is not easy to reconcile it with good Sense; for, so far as I can take it, it is this, If these Churches were no more but Congregations, or Company's assembling together in one Place; then, throughout the Word of God, the Word Church, in this Matter of a Congregation, is of the same Use as in the Proposition, that is, denotes a Congregation. Now, granting for once, that the Churches of *Jerusalem*, *Ephesus* and *Antioch*, were but single Congregations, where is the Connection for establishing that the Word *Church*, every where else throughout the Word of God, when speaking of a particular Church, signifies a single Congregation?

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tion? Verily, tho' the Consequent were granted; yet it by no Means follows from the Antecedent.

Secondly, Does our Author imagine, there was no Church *some Way Visible*, but these that were Congregational? Is not the Catholick Church of Christ *some Way Visible*? And indeed our Author, when he defines a Church, by a stated worshipping Congregation, he does but handsomly beg the Thing he inclines, by Placing that in its Definition, which is the Point in Question. If he had designed to deal fairly, he ought, in the first Place, made it appear, that no other Sacred Society, besides a Congregation, ordinarily meeting in one Place, for Publick Worship, can be called a Church, before he had taken it for granted. For to me it seems evident, that particular Congregations are only Consequential, in Reference to God's Design of having a Church militant; and, if the whole World could have joined together in the Publick Worship of God, it would have been more properly a Church, than any particular Assembly of Christians: And as to these, they have their Rise merely from the Impossibility of all Men's joyn- ing together, for the convenient Administration of Gospel Ordinances, and enjoying other Ordinary Church Privileges. The Reason is obvious; seeing the Privileges and Ordinances of the *New Testament*, do primarily and immediately belong to the Catholick Church Visible, in that, for the Administration thereof, Christ gave (a) unto her *Apostles*, who cannot be said to be a Deed of Gift to particular Congregations, their Commission extending to the whole World. Now, our Lord having the whole Catholick and Visible Body immediately and primarily in his Eye, in giving Church Officers,

(a) 1 Cor. 12. 28.

Officers, particular Congregations were only necessary, for the more convenient Participation of these Privileges and Ordinances, which he design'd for the whole Sacred Society. Thus, our Lord, in the Donation of these Privileges, equally respected the whole Church; but because Men cannot have free and convenient Access to assemble in one Place, for the Participation of these, this made a more particular Distribution necessary. From this it is easy to perceive, that the Catholick Church Visible, was the First, not only in the Order of Consideration, but of Nature, it being a plain *Axiom*, That the *Totum Integrale*, or the whole Integral Body, is in Order of Nature before its similar Parts. Thus, the primary Notion of a Church, doth not belong to a particular Congregation as such, nor is Ecclesiastical Government immediately given to these, but unto the whole Catholick Body; tho' the actual Exercise of Government is most frequent and discernable in the former. And, as the Notion of a particular Church, involves in it the Necessity of a Government therein; so, why a National Society of Christians, incorporated in the Unity of the same Ecclesiastical Government, who have a Right to participate of Gospel Ordinances, in the convenient Distribution of them into particular Congregations, may not be called a National Church, I profess I cannot see. For, on Supposition our Author's Principles should take Place in any Kingdom, and a popular Government obtain, then I would infer from the Oneness of Christian Society, or Visible Body of Christ, That by what Proportion One or Two are subjected to a whole Congregation, by the same Proportion, a Congregation was subject to an Assembly or Congregation of a whole Province or Nation; and,

and, by how much the Christians of a whole Province or Nation bear a nearer Proportion to the Catholick Body of Christ, than any particular Congregation; by so much is their Care one for another, more necessary, and comes nearer to the primary Intention of Christ: And besides, the keeping of the whole *from any Schism*, includes all the Parts, but the Parts not the whole Body. Now, upon the same Principles, the Representatives of a Church, whether they be compared with the Collectives, or among themselves, are subjected after the same Manner. But of this, more afterwards; Only I must observe, that *Parker (a)*, no great Enemy to the *Independents*, allows, That many Congregations are Combined in one, in that very Manner in which many Members are united together in one Church.

Thirdly, It is plainly refused, that either the Church of *Jerusalem*, or any of these mentioned by our Author, were only Congregational. Nay, I do here take the Freedom to put our Author to it, to give a suitable Proof, of a single Congregation in the *New Testament*, in any of these Churches planted by the Apostles, so that they consisted of one and no more. And how far he has been successful this Way, in his after Attempts, I leave it to the Judicious and Impartial to consider. And before I dismiss this Head, I desire our Author may assign us, what place of the *New Testament* it is, that calls any single Church, the Church at *Antioch*, at *Corinth*, at *Ephesus*, &c. He that pretends a superlative Regard to Scripture Stile, ought strictly to regard it himself. We have frequent Mention of the Church of *Ephesus*, &c. but no where

(a) De Polit. Eccles. Pag. 331, 332.

where at *Ephesus*, &c. But this was not without Design.

He adds, *We do not find the Officers, or Representatives of any Church, or Churches, or any Congregation, or Assembly of them called the Church; but we find the People distinguished from them, called the Church, Acts 15. 22. Acts 20. 17, 28. By these, and such like Places, it appears, That the Proposition speaks in Scripture Stile, when it says, a Church of Jesus Christ with its Presbytery. It is true, that both Flock and Overseers are frequently called the Church, but it cannot be made manifest, that the Overseers or Representatives of the Flock or Flocks, are ever called a Church, as it is manifest, that the whole Flock--- when spoken of distinctly from the Overseers, is called the Church. But here, let it be observed, 1. That our Author's adducing Acts. 15. 22. for a Proof of the Body of the People's being called a Church, as contradistinct from the Rulers and Officers thereof, is but a bare Assertion, without Proof; seeing it is denied by many learned and grave Divines, and maintain'd on good Reasons to be a Representative Church, made up of the Members of that Famous Synod, held at *Jerusalem*, of which, more in its proper Place. 2. When our Author says, We find the People distinguished from the Overseers, called the Church; I'll readily grant, That a Number of Christians, without Pastors, may be called a *Church* in a Metaphysical Sense, that is, for a Company of Persons making the Profession of Christianity, in Opposition to the Blind and Heathenish World; but that ever these are called a *Church* in a Political or Ministerial Sense, as she is describ'd, *Rom. 12. 4. 1 Cor. 12. 14, 15.* is no where said in Scripture. In this last Sense of the Church, she is endued with*

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with Ecclesiastical Government, and there is a manifest Difference put between the Governing and Governed. So, the Pastors or Rulers of the Church are distinguished from the Body of the People; no less than the Latter are from the Former; and why the One may not have the Name of Church ascribed to them, as well as the Other, I profess I cannot be satisfied. 3. One would think our Author's Remarks on this Head, are so like the *Independents at Aberdeen*, who published a Letter about the Year 1654. in Defence of their New Light, that they were borrowed from it. Their Words are, *It is not to be found in the Gospel, that a Company of Elders, whether of a Class or Presbytery, apart from the Congregation, is called a Church. Indeed, a Congregation with Elders commonly, yea, and sometimes Contradistinguished from Elders, and sometimes without Elders, is termed a Church, Acts 1. 5, 4, 22, 23. & 14. 23.* These two Passages being so exactly the same, I shall here subjoin the Answer of the Worthy and Judicious Mr. *Wood (b)*, whose Words are these, " To pass sundry Things
 " that might be noted on this Argument, and for
 " Brevity's Sake, to insist only upon that which
 " is Material, the Drift of this first Argument,
 " tends to the Probation of the former Part, involved in the Author's Assertion, *to wit*, That
 " the Power of Jurisdiction Ecclesiastick, is not
 " in the Elders or Officers of the Church, but in
 " the Community of Believers jointly with the
 " Elders: And the Weight of the whole Argument lies upon the Signification of the Term
 " *Church*. And all which is said, is but an Old
 " Song, that has been a Hundred Times dashed
 " by Worthy and Learned Men already-----: For
 the

(b) Against Lockyers, Pag. 365, 366, 367.

“ the present, I shall but say these Things on it.
 “ 1. When, as these Author's say, That, in the
 “ New Testament, the Name of the Church is
 “ taken, sometimes for the Congregation (*i. e.*
 “ in their Sense, the Community of Believers)
 “ with the Eldership jointly; sometimes for the
 “ Congregation, as Contradistinguished from El-
 “ ders; and sometimes for a Congregation with-
 “ out Elders; and asserteth that here, in this Place,
 “ it is to be understood in the first of these three
 “ Acceptations, *to wit*, as it comprehendeth both
 “ Congregation and Elders, (*or a Church of Jesus*
 “ *Christ, with its Presbytery, as our Author has it,*)
 “ I would gladly know, how, and by what Argu-
 “ ment they prove it is so to be understood here,
 “ and not rather in One of the other Two, for
 “ the Congregation as contradistinguished from
 “ the Elders, or of the Congregation without El-
 “ ders. For that we see only asserted by them,
 “ but no Proof of it brought: Only this much is
 “ insinuate, that it is commonly so used: But
 “ that will not prove, that so it must be taken, in
 “ this particular Place. If they would essay to
 “ bring any Argument to prove, that the Name
 “ of the Church, here, must be taken, not for
 “ the Congregation, as Contradistinguished from,
 “ or without the Elders, but for the Congregation
 “ with the Eldership jointly; I doubt not but we
 “ should find them all to be such, as speak Power
 “ of Jurisdiction and Government in the Elder-
 “ ship, as Contradistinguished from the rest of
 “ the Congregation. 2. What tho' the Word
 “ *Church* be no where else in the *New Testament*
 “ used for the Elders or Governors of the Church,
 “ as Contradistinguished from the Body of Belie-
 “ vers; yet this is but a very weak Argument to
 prove

“ prove, That it is not so to be understood here,
 “ (*Matth. 18. 17.*) so be, that the genuine Gram-
 “ matical Signification thereof be such, as may
 “ be applied (as indeed the Word answering to it
 “ in the *Hebrew* is frequently, in the Old Testa-
 “ ment applied) to signify a *College* or *Society* of
 “ *Judges*, or *Governors*, as Contradistinguished from
 “ the People----. It is some Rashness in the Au-
 “ thor’s, to call this Sense of the Word a coined
 “ Sense, (*And say I, for our Author, to call it a*
 “ *Thing altogether foreign to the Scripture Style.*)
 “ Even Prophane *Greek* Authors have used it in
 “ such a Sense, I mean, for a Meeting of Rulers.
 “ *Demosthenes* used the Word *Ἐκκλησία*, *pro con-*
 “ *cione magnatum.* Verily, whether we take the
 “ Word Church here in a different Signification
 “ from that whereby it signifies the Society of
 “ Visible Christians generally, comprehending
 “ Professors as well as Rulers, or not; yet, that
 “ not all and every one comprehended under that
 “ Signification otherwise, but only the Rulers,
 “ are intended, as the Persons, to whom the pub-
 “ lick Act, spoken of in the Place, receiving of
 “ Publick Delations of Scandals, and inflicting of
 “ Censures, now does belong, is here invincibly
 “ demonstrate; because, otherwise, in the *New*
 “ *Testament*, these Acts, as all other Acts of Ec-
 “ clesiastick Authoritative Government, are com-
 “ mitted and attributed unto the Officers of the
 “ Church, as such, *Matth. 16. 18. John 20. 21,*
 “ *22. 1 Tim. 5. 1, 19. Tit. 1. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 12.*
 “ *Heb. 13. 7, 17. 1 Pet. 5. 1, 2.* And accordingly to
 “ them, as contradistinguished from the Body of
 “ Professors, are given Names importing Autho-
 “ rity and Government: But no where, in the
 “ Scripture of the *New Testament*, shall any Man
 shew

“ shew us, either Name or Thing of Government given to private Professors.” This much may suffice for an Answer at present.

Our Author immediately adds, *The Church Representative*, as it is called, is a *Thing* altogether foreign to Scripture Stile. And, Pag. 52. If we look through all the Instances of Discipline, recorded in the Word, we'll find, if we have consider'd what is before said, they went not beyond a Congregation and its Presbytery. The same Thing appears from the Fundamental Rule of Discipline, of which we have been speaking, Matth. 18. 15---, 20. Much Dust has been raised, to obscure these plain Words; and odd Shifts have been made about the Import of the Word Church here. But it is plain, that our Lord gives, here, a standing Rule for Discipline among his Disciples, in the Kingdom of Heaven, unto the End of the World; and that the Import of the Word Church must be taken from the Apostles----. That a Church Representative, as it is called, is an utter stranger to the Apostolick Stile---, But, after the offending Brother has neglected to hear the One, or Two more, where goes the Offended Brother next to tell his Trespas? Is he, at first, to leap over the Congregation whereof he is a Member, with its Presbytery? Or, is his first Step beyond that? No, this cannot be said. And where should he go next? Or, if the other Brother judge himself lesed, where should he go for Redress? No where, that our Lord speaks of, but Heaven. Here are a great many bold Assertions, without any suitable Proof; and indeed, were his Arguments cast into the Form of a Syllogism, they would misken themselves. Besides, it is not a little surprising, that one should, with so much Confidence, bring forth into the World so many old Cants, that have effectually been born down by solid Reason

son and Scripture, before ever our Author was born. For, all that is advanced on this Head, is nothing but what is to be seen in the forementioned Letter, where they say, *The Church spoken of in this Text, which has complete Power of Binding and Loosing, is the first Ecclesiastical Judicatory, to which belongeth Judicial Cognizance of Offences. For, if Private Admonition do not gain the Offender, then the Command is, Tell the Church: But our Classical Presbytery is not the first Judicatory to which appertains Judicial Cognizance of Offences: For, 1. They come to Sessions, and only by Refers, from Sessions to Presbyteries: Therefore, the Church here spoken of, as having complete Power of Binding and Loosing, cannot be the Classical Presbytery, but the Eldership of the Congregation. No where do we read in the Gospel, of Jurisdiction and Relation to Censure committed to a Classical Presbytery.* He that compares these two Passages, will see an exact Agreement; and one would have thought, that before our Author had troubled the World with this Cavil anew, he would have consulted the Judicious Mr. Wood, who has effectually baff'd it, to the Satisfaction of every unprejudiced Considerer. Having Occasion afterwards to consider that Text, *Matth. 18.* I shall only here shew, in what Sense we call a Church Representative; and then subjoin the Answer Professor Wood gives to the Independents of *Aberdeen*, because every one has not the Book at Hand. And, 1. If a Representative Church be understood in a strict Sense, as if the Rulers of the Church stood in the Persons of Believers, and judge for them, as their Deputes, or, as if a Body of Professors resigned their Faith and Conscience to such as they made Choice of to represent them, and bound themselves to subject to the Laws enacted by

by these, without Limitation, then we understand no such Representative Church. But our Meaning is, That a Number of such Men as are regularly ordained to bear Office in Christ's House, and by Virtue of their Office, are impowered to Rule over the People, in the Lord, to make Constitutions and Decrees agreeable to the Sacred Oracles, and act, in all, for their truest Interests, are, in this Respect, their Representatives. Thus, the Synod at *Jerusalem* made Decrees, which had a Binding Force on the absent Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, who had no more but their Commissioners in that Assembly. And if there were not a Representative Church in this Sense, there could be no Jurisdictional Act of a Church valid, where either Two or Three dissented, or any Number were absent. Besides, if this were not granted, it would necessarily follow, That the Excommunication of the Incestuous Person could not have had the Force of a Jurisdictional Deed on the Apostle *Paul*, or others in that Church, who might not be personally present. Moreover, that the Rulers of Christ's House have a Power to delegate some of their own Number, to meet and associate with others, in neighbouring Churches, in the more Common and Weighty Affairs, in which all of them are concerned, is manifest from the Example of the Church of *Antioch*, Acts 15. in sending Commissioners to *Jerusalem*, and the Latter in sending some of their own Company to *Antioch*, to represent to that Church what was Publickly transacted in the Assembly or Representative Church. Thus also *Timothy*, *Titus* and *Epaphroditus*, were sent by Churches, as Commissioners to other Churches, on remarkable Occasions. 2. That which Effectually overturns the

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whole of our Author's bold Assertions, is, That we plainly refuse, that the Church there spoken of, could be restricted to the Presbytery of any Particular Congregation; seeing we do not read, in the whole *New Testament*, of a positive Instance or Example of a Congregational Eldership; but still of a Presbytery common to several Congregations, in these Churches which were planted by the Apostles, in several of the Cities throughout the *Roman Empire*. This we hope to make good in the Sequel of this Treatise. So, all our Author has said from the Elderships of the Churches of *Jerusalem*, *Corinth* and *Ephesus*, and others mentioned in the *Acts of the Apostles*, is to no Purpose, seeing he still goes upon the Supposition, that these were merely *Congregational*. And indeed it is on this Bottom his whole Superstructure stands, which, if overturned, the Whole must fall to the Ground. 3. I might, at great Length, give the Answer of the Judicious Mr. *Wood* * on this Head; but shall only give some few Sentences, that I may not be too Tedious. And, “ 1. Indeed, Offences committed by Particular Persons, settled Members of particular Congregations, and as yet abiding within the Bounds of the Congregation, comes first to the Session or Eldership of the particular or single Congregation. But there are many Offences, the judicial Cognizance whereof, comes not first to a Session, but to a Presbytery; yea, it may be a Synod; yea, may be, to the National Assembly. When a private Person, having fallen into some scandalous Sin, and being convinced before a Session, adds Refractoriness against the Discipline, and Obstinacy to his former

* *Ubi supra*, Pag. 367. 368. &c.

“ mer Offence, this is a New Offence, and the
 “ Judicial Cognizance of this Offence belongeth,
 “ first, to a Class or Presbytery---. We say here,
 “ That the Church invested with Authority to
 “ Cognosce Judicially, and inflict Censures on Of-
 “ fences, is the Rulers of the Visible Church Uni-
 “ versal, as joined in *Collegio*, or assembled,
 “ whether in the lesser or inferior Colleges or As-
 “ semblies (as a Congregational Eldership is, in
 “ respect of all others; a Classcal Presbytery,
 “ in regard of Synods; a Provincial Synod, in
 “ regard of a National; this, in regard of a
 “ Synod of more Nations, and haply associate for
 “ Government) to which as the first Judicatory,
 “ Matters may come for Judicial Cognizance,
 “ or, in a larger and superior (such as is a Clas-
 “ sical Presbytery in relation to a Congrega-
 “ tional; a Synod, in relation to a Classcal Pres-
 “ bytery, &c.) to which, may be, the Matter
 “ cannot come at first, or, as to the first Judica-
 “ tory, having Power of Judicial Cognizance of
 “ it. It is true, that in such a Case as our Sa-
 “ viour instanceth in the Text, when Offence is
 “ given by one particular Member of a Con-
 “ gregation, single and fixed in its Constitution,
 “ and proper Officers. (Which fixing of single
 “ Congregations, under appropriated Officers, is
 “ not necessary by any Divine Institution: For
 “ more Congregations, may be, have been, as it
 “ seemeth, in several of the Primitive Church-
 “ es, and are at this Day, in some Orthodox
 “ Churches, served by the same Officers in Com-
 “ mon, without Violation of any Divine Institu-
 “ tion.) Christ's Command, *Tell the Church*, in-
 “ tends, that the Matter should be brought to the
 “ Eldership of the Congregation, as the first Ju-

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“ dicatory to which belongeth Judicial Cogni-
 “ zance of it. Likeas, if the Congregation be
 “ not fixed by it self, in its Constitution and Offi-
 “ cers, that Command intends the bringing of the
 “ Matter, at first, to an Eldership common to
 “ more Congregations. As also, if the Matter
 “ to be judged, be of publick and more common
 “ Concernment than of one Congregation, that
 “ same Commandment, warrants, by an Analo-
 “ gy and Proportion, the bringing of the Matter,
 “ first, to some more large Presbytery or College
 “ of Elders, than the Congregational, as the first
 “ Judicature to cognize judicially upon it: But
 “ withal, let it be observed, That when Christ
 “ instituteth this Order, that Offences, when they
 “ cannot be removed otherwise, should be brought
 “ to the Church, that is, to an Ecclesiastick Ju-
 “ dicature, he saith not, that they may not, in
 “ any Case, proceed further for Judicial Cogni-
 “ tion and Sentence upon the Matter, than to
 “ the first Judicature to which the judicial Cogni-
 “ tion of it belongeth: Nor is there any Ground
 “ in his Words, whereupon this can, by good
 “ Consequence, be inferred. In a Word, there
 “ is nothing in this Text, either against the judi-
 “ cial Power of larger Elderships than Congre-
 “ gational, such as are Classical Presbyteries and
 “ Synods: Nor, against the Subordination of Con-
 “ gregational Elderships, to the Jurisdiction and
 “ Authority of such large Elderships. But, up-
 “ on the Contrary, there is, in them, solid
 “ Ground, whereupon both have been clearly
 “ demonstrate by several Presbyterian Writers,
 “ and discussed all contrary Exceptions and Rea-
 “ sonings upon the Place: For shortness I refer
 “ the Reader to Mr. *Rutherford*.”

And

And whereas the *Aberdeen* Author's alledge, *That no where do we read in the Gospel of Jurisdiction, in relation to Censure, to Classcal Presbytery*; and our Author, if we look through all the *Instances of Discipline, recorded in the Word, we'll find---*, *They went not beyond a Congregation and its Presbytery.* To which Mr. *Wood* answers, " 1. If the
 " Meaning be, no where in the Gospel do we
 " read this Power committed, by a formal Pre-
 " cept, to a Classcal Presbytery by Name, or
 " specifically by it self; it may be granted, with-
 " out Prejudice to what we assert (and I pray,
 " where will these Authors read, in the Gospel,
 " this Power committed to the Eldership of a sin-
 " gle Congregation specifically, and that, as they
 " maintain, *Independently and Supremely?*) 2. It
 " is sufficient for us, if we read in the Gospel,
 " this Power of Jurisdiction committed to Offi-
 " cers and Rulers of the Church, as united toge-
 " ther *in Collegio*, either in one single Congrega-
 " tion, or over more Congregations combined
 " and associate together, as is most convenient
 " for Exercise of their Ecclesiastick Communi-
 " on: And this we read, *Matth. 18. 17, 18.* For
 " there, Discipline and Ecclesiastick Jurisdic-
 " tion, instituted by Christ, is committed unto
 " the Officers and Rulers of the Church, as unit-
 " ed *in Collegio*: Not to the Officers of a single
 " Congregation only, as united; but unto Offi-
 " cers of the whole Catholick Visible Church of
 " Christ, as united in lesser or larger Combina-
 " tions, even to an Oecumenical Assembly: Be-
 " cause the Power of Discipline and Jurisdiction
 " Ecclesiastick there, is instituted and intended
 " by Christ, to be a Remedy against all Scan-
 " dals and Offences in his Church; but all and

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“ every Sort of Scandal falling out in the Visible
 “ Church of Christ, cannot be so remedied or re-
 “ moved by the College of Officers in a single
 “ Congregation. They can only be a Means for
 “ remedying and removing, this Way, Scandals
 “ and Offences concerning their particular Con-
 “ gregation; and therefore, there must be under-
 “ stood, as intended here by Christ, larger Eccle-
 “ siastical Assemblies and Judicatures, to exer-
 “ cise Discipline and Jurisdiction for remedying
 “ Offences and Scandals, which Congregational
 “ Eldershops cannot reach. 3. It is sufficient, if
 “ we read in the Gospel, approven Examples of
 “ larger Presbyteries than Congregational, Clas-
 “ sical or Synodical, authoritatively governing
 “ and exercising Acts of Rule over more particu-
 “ lar Churches. We read of such a Presbytery,
 “ as we call Classical, in *Jerusalem, Ephesus, Co-*
 “ *rinth*, ruling authoritatively more Congregations,
 “ as has been demonstrate by several Learned
 “ Men. ”--- This much is a sufficient Answer to
 our Author; and I wish he would consider, *Matth.*
 18. 20.

Before I leave this Head, I shall, in a few
 Things, take Notice of the Conclusive Inference
 our Author makes, from the Proofs he alledges for
 making the Name *Church* and *Congregation* reciproc-
 al Terms. He says, Page 18. *Upon this Head of*
the Scripture Language about the Church, it will not
be easy otherwise to satisfy any Man's Conscience, how
it is, that the Holy Ghost, when speaking of all the
Disciples of Christ, in a Nation or Province, that
could not assemble for ordinary in one Place, so con-
stantly abstains from calling them the Church of such
a Nation or Province, or one Church by themselves,
but says, the Brethren, or Saints, in such Places, Acts

15. 23. 2 Cor. 1. 1. Gal. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 8. 1. 1 Cor. 16. 19. But when speaking of the Disciples of Christ in a City or Town, which might assemble together ordinarily in one Place, calls them Church, saying, the Church of Antioch, &c. Now, 1. It is plainly refused, and afterwards, I hope, is made evidently false, that any of the single Churches mentioned by our Author, consisted but of one single Congregation; and so, his Observation is nought, and but a repeating of what hath been frequently and Learnedly Refuted, by many Pious and Judicious Divines, who were, at least, no less concerned to have their Consciences satisfied, as to the Constitution of Christ's Church, than our Author. There is a misinformed Conscience, no less than an Erroneous Mind, and the Greatest Hereticks, in all Ages, have made noisy Clamours on that Head. Besides, were it granted to him, that all the single Churches spoken of in the *New Testament* were Congregational; yet his Inference would, by no Means, follow from the Premises, namely, That there was no Foundation for National or Provincial Churches. For, tho' *National* and *Provincial Churches* are not, in as many Words, in the *New Testament*; yet it will no more follow, That the Thing it self is not laid down by the Holy Ghost, than because there is not such an Express Word as *Trinity*, or *Infant Baptism*, therefore these are not warranted or Authorized by the Word of God. Nay, the famous Council at *Jerusalem*, was both visible and conspicuous, and made up of more single Churches than one; yet all, in one Body, they are called the *Whole Church*, Acts 15. 22. And indeed this One, or *Whole Church*, was separately denominated Churches; but this is not to be understood, as if it were in Opposition to Provincial and National

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Churches and Synods, but in Opposition to the National and Typical Church of *Judea*, which the *Jews* were so fond of, and expected should have been again restored. This is evident, in that the *Jewish* Nation were under a Moral and Ecclesiastical Government, distinct from that which was Typical, which has the same Grounds of Equity and Force under the *New Testament*, that it had under the *Old*, as has been already observed, and afterwards falls in also. From this, the Impartial Considerer will perceive, how trifling the Observation of our Author is, Page 19. *The whole Nation of the Jews was one Church, under the Old Testament; and it is very remarkable, that after the Dispersion, all the Disciples of Christ in Judea, are not called Church by themselves, or one Church, but Churches.* ---- 2. If there be one General and Visible Church, made up of all the Professors of the true Religion throughout the whole Earth, which, together with their Office-bearers, make one Political or Organick Body, having *Ears, Eyes, Hands and Feet, &c.* that is, several Organs, Instruments and Officers in it, for the Good and Perfection of the whole Body; then, much more there may be a National or Provincial Church, which is visible and united together in the Unity of one Ecclesiastical Government. That there is such a Ministerial Catholick Church, is expressly declared from these Texts (a), tho' our Author's diligent Search has wholly overlook'd them, lest they should prove hurtful to his Cause. The Invisible Body of Christ, as such, is not Organical, or a Church with an external Government; but there is an Universal or Catholick Visible and Organick Body, which is a standing Witness,

(a) Eph. 4. 4, 11, 12. Rom. 12. 4, --- 10. 1 Cor. 12. 12, &c.

Witness, and stable Foundation against the *Independent* Notions, and will still be a Warrant for National or Provincial Churches, where Christianity is so largely diffused, or a Ministerial Church is planted. 3. There were, indeed, several Churches in *Galatia*; but, at the same Time, they appear to have been under one Ecclesiastical Government; for they are all written to, as if one single Church, under the strictest Ties of Unity, and Oneness of Judgment and Affections. They are all, in one Body, required to beware of false Teachers (a); guard against corrupt Doctrines, Divisions and Animosities. And, as it was said to the Church of *Corinth*, *A little Leaven leaveneth the whole Lump*, 1 Cor. 5. 6. So, the several Churches of *Galatia* were but one Lump; and the Apostle expressly tells them, that a little Leaven should infect the whole Body, and produce the same Effects in them, as among the *Corinthians*, Gal. 5. 9. & Verse 12. *I would they were cut off that trouble you*. Now, what was said to any Particular Church, for the maintaining of Order, Unity, and carrying on the joint Edification, and Preservation of that Sacred Body from being leavened with false Doctrines and Disorders, which is not said jointly to the several Churches of *Galatia*? They that were *Spiritual* among them, were required (b), to *restore in the Spirit of Meekness*, such as were overtaken in a Fault, to bear one anothers Burdens, and cut off from among them, by the Rod of Discipline, false Teachers, or such as troubled them. From all which, it is easy to perceive, That this Epistle was indited to them, as one Sacred Body, who were to have a Care one for another, and act in a joint Course of Management, for their own Safety and

Prefer-

(a) Gal. 1. 8, 9. & 5. 10, 15. (b) Gal. 6. 1, 2.

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Preservation. Now, tho' the Name *Provincial Church* is not here exprest, yet the Thing itself is held forth in the strongest Terms; so that we may justly say, That the several Churches of *Galatia* were to communicate together in a Visible and External Government, which seems to have very much of a Presbyterian Face.

Again, that which is a Confirmation of the same Thing, is, that the Churches scattered throughout *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia* and *Bithynia*, are expressly called *the Flock of God*; and the Elders are conjunctly required to *feed*; or, as the Original Word signifies, *Rule and Govern* this one Flock, which was among them, *not by Constraint, but Willingly* (a). That these Elders were particularly to administrate Word and Sacraments to these distinct Churches separately, is not to be questioned; but that they were, or had a Right to exercise Jurisdiction over all of them conjunctly, in one Ecclesiastical Body or Church, seems to be exprest in the strongest Terms, both from the Oneness of the Flock, and the Charge committed to the Rulers, as to the Exercise of Government. Now, I would desire of our Author, that he would give a plain Answer, Whether this Flock was *One, because* they assembled all in one Place for Publick Worship? or, on Account of their being united under one Ecclesiastical Government, and all the Members communicating together in such Sacred Things as fall under the Sphere of a Jurisdictional Power? The first is utterly impossible, from the Distance of the Places in which the Disciples resided, and expressly contrary to the Design of the Apostle. If the Latter be granted, which, in Justice, cannot be refused, then all we plead for, is obtain'd. For
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(a) 1 Pét. 1. 1. Compare, 5. 1. 2.

here are several Churches united together in the Unity of one Ecclesiastical Government, and so, in this Respect, but one Church; which seems to have the ugly Aspect of that which we call National. And indeed, there is no more a Shadow of Inconsistency, for one to say, a Congregation is a Flock, in respect of its own Members, and a Member, in respect of a National Church; *than* it is to say, that every Believer, consider'd by himself, is a *Tree of Righteousness*, and *Temple of God*; and, at the same Time, when he is compared with others that are in Christ, he is but a Branch of the *True Vine*, and a Stone of that *Living Temple*; seeing he is designed both Ways in the Sacred Oracles.

This much is sufficient to vindicate a National or Provincial Church, to any unprejudiced Considerer. 4. Not to take up Time with our Author's angry and invective Insinuations against the Presbyterians, on this Head, knowing that our Lord hath said, *Blessed are ye when Men shall revile you,-- and say all Manner of Evil against you.* I shall here subjoyn two or three Reasons from the worthy Mr. Gillespie, * wherefore a *National Church* is not mentioned by the inspired Pen-men of the *New Testament*, in so many Words, and they are these, *namely*, " 1. Because it was not necessary; the general Rules of the Word, together with Nature's Light, which directs Common-wealths in Things of the same Kind, being sufficient to direct the Church therein. 2. As Seasons and Times for meetings of Assemblies, so the just Bounds thereof, in so many different Places of the World, are Things of that Kind, which were not determinable in Scripture, unless the World had been filled with Volumes thereof; " for,

* Affect of Church Gov. Pag. 163, 164.

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“ for, *Individua sunt infinita.* 3. Because the
 “ Constitution of Synods Provincial and National,
 “ is not Universal for all Times and Places: For
 “ Example, there may be in a remote Island, Ten
 “ or Twelve Christian Congregations, which, be-
 “ sides their particular Elderships, have a com-
 “ mon Presbytery, but are not capable of Synods,
 “ either Provincial or National. Again, let there
 “ be an Island containing Forty Christian Congre-
 “ gations, they shall be therein, besides Presby-
 “ teries, one Kind of a Synod, but not two Kinds.
 “ Besides, the Reformed Congregations within a
 “ great Nation, may, haply, be so few, or so dis-
 “ pers’d and distant, or so Persecuted, that they
 “ can neither have Provincial or National Assem-
 “ blies. Thus, I leave our Author in this Place.
 The Impartial Considerer will judge for himself.

S E C T. III.

What is necessary to make a Member of the Visible Church. The true State of the Question cleared. Ten Arguments, proving that a credible Profession, and blameless Conversation, are the Grounds of admitting Members of the Visible Church. An explicit Congregational Covenant not necessary. The Objections of Independents answered.

THAT which next in Order falls under Consideration, is, to enquire, What is necessary to make One a Member of the Visible Church. It is readily granted, both by the *Presbyterians*, and *Independents*, That there are none which be true Members of Christ, or of the Number of his Invisible Body, but such as are ingrafted into him by
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an unfeigned Faith : All the Stones of that Building are Living and Spiritual, and derive Influences from their Adorable Head, answerable to all their Wants, and shall, at last, be seated by the Sides of that pure River of Life, proceeding from the Throne of God and the Lamb. The Question then is, concerning such as are intitled to be Members of the Visible Church, or are to be allowed by the Rulers thereof to enjoy the outward Privileges of the Gospel. As there are internal and saving Blessings in the Covenant of Grace ; Christ himself, and all the Riches of his Purchase ; Grace, and more Grace here, and Immortal Glory hereafter ; so there are external Privileges arising therefrom, and belonging thereto, *namely*, the enjoying of the Word Preached ; Partaking of the Holy Sacraments ; and being under the Inspection and Government of the Rulers of the Redeemer's House. The first are what none have a Right unto, but the Effectually called and Redeemed ; but the latter may be enjoyed by Hypocrites and Unbelievers. Thus, Persons whose Religion is no more but the Breath of their Mouths, and who are wholly Strangers to the inward Workings of the Holy Ghost, may be admitted by the Church to external Ordinances ; and yet, at the same Time, have no Divine Titles to the saving Blessings of the New Covenant. Again, it must be considered, that tho' Believers in Christ are called the Invisible Church, yet it is not as if they were not to be seen, or altogether Imperceptible. The Ground of the Distinction between the Visible and Invisible Church, lies chiefly in this, *namely*, the Difference there is between the Foundations on which a Person is admitted to be a Member of the One, and that which intitles him to be a Member of the Other. That
which

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which is the Ground of One's being received in to be a Member of the Invisible Church, is Saving Grace, and nothing else; and this is what is not certainly known to any, but those on whom it is bestow'd, and him who implanted it. The infallible Knowledge of the Heart, and the Ornaments of Grace therein, are only competent to God Himself; and all the Fruits thereof in the Life, may be counterfeit by Hypocrites, that no Man on Earth is able to make the Difference, by his strictest Observations; nay, the Believer himself is many Times at an Uncertainty. But, on the other Hand, what makes one to be a Member of the Visible Church, are Things that are obvious to the External Observation of the Church. Thus, all Believers are Members both of the Visible and Invisible Church of Christ, they having both an outward Profession, which intitles them to the One, and an inward Principle of Grace, by which they have a Right unto the Other; but an External Appearance and Profession, where there is no more, is that which will, and ought to determine the Minds of the Rulers of Christ's House, as to the Admission of Persons to be Members of the Visible Church. This is all that is left to the ordinary Ministers of Christ's House to judge of; the Discerning of Spirits is now ceased; and the Judging of the Heart, is the sole Prerogative of God.

And that we may come to a clear State of the Question, let it be considered, *First*, That the proper Subject with whom the Covenant of Grace is made, and to whom the Promises thereof belong, is the Invisible Church of real Believers. To this Church alone it is, that all the Titles, of *Saints*, of *Faithful Ones*, *Christ's Spouse*, &c. can be ascribed; and a Profession of Religion, however specious

of the Christian Church. III

ous it may be, has no Claim to these, but where there is real Grace accompanying it. This is the Church, which is inviolably built on the *Rock Christ*, and against which *the Gates of Hell shall not prevail*. And it is to be observed, that that which our Lord had in Design, in giving Officers unto his Church, was not for the Perfecting and Building up of a mere Visible Church; but that which was Invisible, *namely*, the Perfecting of the Saints, and Edifying the Body of Christ, *till they should all come to the Unity of the Faith, and the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ* *. Thus, the Visible Church, as such, is not within the New Covenant, nor have its Members any Title from God to partake of the Seals thereof, but in so far as he is their God, and they his justified and sanctified Ones, *Jer. 31. 33, 34*. Nor are Professors, merely as such, the Fruit of Christ's Purchase, or those whom he Redeemed with his own Blood; but only they whom he hath chosen, and in due Time effectually called unto himself, *Acts 20. 28. 1 Cor. 12*. From this, it is easy to perceive, that it is only the Invisible Church of real Believers, that is inviolably secured by the Promise of God, against Apostasy and final Defection, *Heb. 6. 18, 19, 20*.

Secondly, Let it be observed, That a true Church is not to be restricted to this or the other particular Congregation, as this was only a true Church and none else. For none, possibly, dare say, with Certainty, that this, or the other Congregation is the True Spouse or Redeemed of Christ; This is not the Object of Sense. The True Spouse of Christ is *all glorious within* (a), and that which effectually constitutes her to be so, is not what is perceivable by outward Observation, but *the hidden*

* Eph. 4. 11, 12. (a) Psalm 45. 13.

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den Man in the Heart (a): And it is but a vain Imagination, for any to reckon, that there is a Visible Union between Believers, as such; for, as nothing that is Invisible, can constitute and make up the Nature of that which is truly Visible; so the Essence of a Visible Church, as such, must be compos'd of that which is, in its own Nature, Visible, and not of true Faith and real Grace, which are only infallibly known to God. This far we may, with Certainty, conclude, as to Churches, that wherever God sets up the Candle of the Gospel, and a true Ministry, there will be certainly such as God has brought in, or will gather to himself. For, tho' there may, at first, be no Converts there; yet God's erecting a Ministry among them, still gives us Unquestionable Ground to conclude, he had Designs of Grace in sending it to any Place or People. But, for any to confine the Working of God's Spirit to this or the other Congregation, and say, These, or the other Visible Professors, are the *Spouse of Christ*, &c. none dare, with Certainty, affirm, without invading the Divine Prerogative.

Thirdly. Thus then, a Visible Profession of the Gospel, and Acknowledgments of God's Method of Salvation propos'd therein, is that which makes up the Essence and Nature of the Visible Church. It is acknowledged, that the Prophane, Scandalously Wicked, and Obstinate Enemies to the Gospel, are to be cast out of the Church, and if without, not to be received in; but such as are sober in their Lives, subject themselves to Gospel Ordinances, are willing to learn and make Proficiency in the Knowledge of Christ, and Way of Salvation, are to be repute Visible Members of the
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Visible Church, tho' there be no positive Certainty of their being truly regenerate. From these Things it will be easy to perceive wherein the Difference lies between the Visible and Invisible Church; and were this duly adverted unto, there would be no Shadow of Ground for such a noisy Clamour about the Admission of Members to a Visible Church. It is the Confounding of these two really distinct Things, that is the real Source of all Disputation on this Head: For it is granted by every Orthodox Divine, That it is the Duty of every Member of the Visible Church to have Grace, and, from the Heart to obey the Doctrine of the Gospel, in order to his being a Member of Christ's Mystical Body, or Invisible Church; without which, all his external Enjoyments will leave him in a perishing Condition, and he shall never come to that *Fulness of Joy, these Rivers of Pleasures, that are at God's right Hand.* But to say, that this is necessary to make a Person a Visible Member of the Visible Church, as such, is nothing else, than to maintain, that that which in its own Nature is Invisible, is necessary to make up the Nature of that which is Visible; which involves a Contradiction. For, tho' a true Believer is both a Member of the Visible and Invisible Church; yet it is his Visible Profession, as such, makes him a Member of the Visible Church, as such; and his Real Grace, or *hidden Man in the Heart*, as such, makes him a Member of the Invisible Church, as such. The Confounding of these Two, is that wherein the Mistake lies. For, I could never yet see one Argument adduced by the *Independents*, to prove that true Believing, or a Credible Evidence of Faith, was necessary to make One a Member of the Vi-

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visible Church, but what was still Probative of that for which it was not adduced; *namely* to make it appear, that none were Members of the Invisible Church, but such as had Grace, and were really Renewed; which is never denied. Now, that a Visible Profession, as has been already said, is sufficient to a Person's being a Member of the Visible Church, as such, tho' there be no real Grace in the Person, will be evident from the following Arguments. Only, before we come to our Proof, there are two or three Things yet to be premised; 1. Our Dispute here is, not concerning the Members of the Invisible Church, or her inward and secret State; but about the Members of the Visible Body of Christ. And it is to be observed, that there is a Difference between a Person's being within the Visible Church, and not a Stranger and Alien, but a Brother, and under the Care and Inspection of a Pastor, and a Part of his Flock; and One's being a Member, as that he is actually admitted to all the Privileges, and outward Acts of Fellowship, in all Christian Duties and Ordinances. It is a Matter beyond Question, that One may be actually a Member of the Visible Church, and yet not actually enjoy every Privilege or Ordinance of Christ's Appointment, by Reason of some Moral or Physical Impediment, under which he may labour. Thus, a Person being overtaken in some Fault, must be debarred from Sealing Ordinances till the Scandal be remov'd, according to Christ's Rule; and yet according to all Orthodox Divines, he is still a Member of the Visible Church, unless his Obstinacy occasion his Rejection, by the Sentence of Excommunication. Besides, the Children of Christian Parents are solemnly admitted Members of the
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the Visible Church; but at the same Time, are not capable, actually to enjoy and partake of all Christian Ordinances and Religious Privileges.

2. It is one Thing for a Person to be qualified for being a Member of the Visible Church, in so far as he may be orderly admitted, by the Rulers of Christs House, to the Number of these who enjoy Gospel Ordinances; and another to have these Qualifications required of him by Divine Command, in order to his having Heaven's Right and Title to the Privileges of the Church. It is not to be doubted, that it is the Duty of every one who will mix himself with the Armies of *Israel*, or the external Communion of the Church, to purify himself even as God is pure, and work out his Salvation with Fear and Trembling: But all that is competent to the Rulers of the Redeemer's House, in their Admission of Persons, is only what is external, and may be judged of by them; for it is a received Axiom among Orthodox Divines, that, *de oculis non judicat Ecclesia*, the Church is not to judge in Things Secret, which the Grace of God, in the Heart of Man, unquestionably is.

3. It must be observed, That there is a Relative Holiness spoken of in Scripture, which consists in the separating and setting apart of Things to a holy Use and Service, which were once common; and there is an Absolute and Inherent Holiness, which denotes the Agreeableness and Conformity of a Person's Actions to the Divine and Revealed Will. As to the first, the Stones of the Temple, * the Temple it self, the Vessels thereof, and the City of *Jerusalem*, are called holy. Thus, Persons consecrate and set apart to sacred Service,

* Lam. 4. 1.

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such as the *Priests* and *Levites*, and especially the *High Priest*, receiv'd this Denomination; and, because God entred into Covenant with the People of *Israel*, and separated them from all the other Nations of the Earth, to be a peculiar People to himself, they are called *Holy*, and said to be *sanctified by God*, *Deut.* 33. *Exod.* 31. 13. *Lev.* 8. 8. & 21. 8. & 22. 32. so the Children of Professing Christian Parents, being comprehended within the Covenant, profess'd and own'd by their Parents, are said to be Holy (a), in that they are separate from the Profane World, and dedicate to God.

But, on the other Hand, there is an Inward and Real Holiness, which consists in the Soul's being made Partaker of the *Divine Nature*, and adorn'd with all the Ornaments of Grace, and Virtues of the Renewing Spirit. And here again, it must be observ'd, That there is an External Holiness, which includes not only that which is Relative and by Dedication; but an Owning and Professing of the True Religion, and Gospel Method of Salvation, propos'd in the Scriptures. This is that which falls under the Cognizance of Men, and all they are required to judge in. Now, it is worth Notice, that when the *Independents* call the Church a Society of *Visible Saints*, either it must be understood to denote the very Nature and Kind of the Thing, from which they receive that Denomination, *namely*, Holiness; or, to express an Adjunct thereof, that is, the outward Discovery or Manifestation of Sanctification in the Inward Man. If it be taken in the first Sense, which I shall be far from saying is sound, then Persons are denominate *Visible Saints*, in so far as they

(a) 1 Cor. 7. 14.

they are adorn'd with outward Holiness, abstracting from the inward Renovation of the Heart. The Reason is plain, because the Epithet *Visible*, expresseth the very Form of the Thing, on Account of which they are said to be Saints. If it be taken in the last Sense, then it expresseth such evident and manifest Signs, as discover plainly, that the Persons are endowed with true Grace and inward Holiness, to the Conviction of Beholders. These Observations will be of Use afterwards.

Thus then, if I mistake not, the Point in Debate lies in this, *namely*, What is necessary to a Person's being receiv'd in, to be a Member of the Visible Church, by the Rulers thereof, or his being accounted not among the Number of those that are without, but within, and so under the Pastoral Care and Inspection, and One to whom Christian Communion is to be allowed, and Duties performed? That which is generally maintained by the *Independents*, is, That such only are to be admitted Members of the Visible Church, as may and ought to be look'd upon, in the Judgment of Charity, as real and True Believers, and that upon convincing Evidence thereof given, first to the Eldership of the Congregation, and thereafter, to all the Members of the Church, before their Admission; at which Time, the Persons are to make a publick Declaration of their Knowledge and Understanding in the Fundamentals of Religion, and then, of the Effectual Working of the Spirit of God on their Souls.

But, on the other Hand, that which is held, with Respect to such as are come out from Heathenism, or some false Religion, by the most of Protestant Churches, is, That they are to be admitted Members of the Visible Church, on a so-

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ber and moral serious outward Profession of the Faith of the true Religion, together with their Engagement to abandon their former sinful Courses: And as to such who are baptized in any true Church, there is nothing more needful to this End, but their being free from publick Scandal accompanied with Obstinacy, and their making a serious Profession of Subjection to the Ordinances of Christ. Thus, I humbly conceive, that a Person making a Profession of the true Religion, which carries in it the Grounds of Credibility, that he is ingenuous in what he speaks, with the other Things already mentioned, is all that is to be demanded, in order to One's being a Member of the Visible Church, or what the Rulers of Christ's House are to require on that Occasion. In a Word, tho' Pastors are indeed to take all Prudent Steps, and embrace every proper Occasion, to know, so far as they can, the State of their Flocks, that they may be the more capable to distribute to every one their Portion in due Season; to awaken the secure and unconcern'd; comfort the feeble minded; and build up the effectually called in the most Holy Faith; yet it is absolutely refused, that there is any Warrant in the Word of God, for the Rulers of Christ's House, to make a previous or Antecedent Trial of Persons their having a Work of Grace on their Spirits, as a Condition of, and in order to their being receiv'd in as Members of the Visible Church. Having thus far clear'd our Way, that which follows in Course, is, to establish what we maintain with some Arguments, and examine these on the other Side.

Arg. 1. Moses, under the Old Testament, did admit Members to the External Communion of the Visible

Visible Church, on their Profession of the True God, and the Dispensation of the Gospel made unto them, without requiring the Evidences of their Conversion, their being translated from a State of Darkneſs to God's marvellous Light, and from the Power of a cunning Tempter. This is manifeſt from a Variety of Scripture Testimonies, and particularly, *Deut. 29.* where the whole Body of the People of *Israel* are accounted Members of the Visible Church of the Redeemer: *Ye ſtand all of you before the Lord your God; your Captains of your Tribes, your Elders, and your Officers, your Wives, and thy Stranger that is in thy Camp, from the Hewer of thy Wood, unto the Drawer of thy Water: That thou ſhouldeſt enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into His Oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this Day: That he may eſtabliſh thee to Day for a People unto himſelf, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath ſaid unto thee, as he has ſworn unto thy Fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, Ver. 10, 11, 12, 13.* By this, there is a clear Diſcovery of a Publick Reception of *Israel*, into external Church Communion; and, that *Moses* demanded Signs of real Grace, in order to their being Partakers of the outward Privileges of that Dispensation of the Goſpel, is ſo far from being true, that the contrary appears from the firſt Verſe of the Chapter: *Yet the Lord hath not given you a Heart to perceive, Eyes to ſee, and Ears to hear, unto this Day.* Were all this vaſt Body true Saints, from whom *Moses* received poſitive Signs of Grace? No. It is plain, that *Moses*, who, at the Direction of Heaven, confirm'd that Adoption, whereby the Lord had long before received *Israel* to be a peculiar People to himſelf, was ſenſible of the unrenewed State of the greateſt Part of that

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huge Company ; but, for all that, did not seclude them from being Members of the Visible Church, or enjoying the external Privileges of the Covenant. And it is observable, what he afterward says of them, *Deut. 31. 27. For I know thy Rebellion, and thy stiff Neck: Behold, while I am yet alive with you this Day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord ; and how much more after my Death ?* Now, if Persons, under the *Old Testament* Dispensation, were admitted to be Members of the Visible Church, without positive Signs of Grace, nay, Persons known to be *Rebellious against God*, we may justly infer there is no Warrant for the *Independent Way* of Admission to External Church Privileges under the Gospel, by requiring evident Marks of Conversion, and an Account of the Working of God's Spirit on their Souls, before they can be accounted among the Number of those that are Within. The Opposite of this is true, *namely*, that in all Churches, Persons ought to be admitted to be Members of the Visible Kingdom of Christ, on their Profession of the true Religion and Christian Faith, without delaying till they can give Evident Signs of real Grace, and being made Partakers of the Divine Nature. None will deny the Connection between the Manner of Admission under the *Old Testament*, to that of the *New*, or Gospel State of the Church in the Fulness of Time, that acknowledge with all Orthodox Divines, that the Constitution of these two Churches were essentially the same ; and, that their only Difference was in Accidentals. 'Tis indeed true, the Anabaptists maintain an Essential Difference ; and the Reason is obvious, because, if it were owned, that these Constitutions were substantially one and the same, it were impossible for them, in a Consistency with themselves,

selves, to refuse the Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism to Infants, seeing the Sacrament of Circumcision was dispensed to them under the first Dispensation of the Covenant, to which the former answers under the *New Testament*. He that inclines to see the Pinch the *Anabaptists* are brought unto, on this Head, may consult what the learned *Baxter* has brought against Mr. *Tombs*, on this Point, *Page 30, &c.*

Arg. 2. If we take a View of the Manner in which *John the Baptist* admitted Members into the Visible Church, in his Day, it will evidently appear, he required no more than a Profession of the true Faith, and Amendment of Life, without any Delay, till he made a Trial of Sincerity as to a Work of Grace on their Souls. Thus we find, he baptised great Multitudes, without Delay or Spending of Time in the Examination of their State: For all *Jerusalem* and *Judea*, and the Regions round about *Jordan*, went out unto him, and were baptised, *Matth. 3. 5, 6.* It is indeed said, this Ordinance was administered unto them, *Confessing their Sins*, in *Verse 6.* of the same *Chapter*; but it must be considered, that this Confession was not made by every one apart by himself, or of particular Sins committed by them. Thus, the Worthy Mr. *Wood* observes, from *Cartwright*, on the Place, That this Confession was not only General, in regard of the Object or Sins committed by them, but also in regard of the Subject, or that it was only in common among them, and not by every particular Person by himself. The *Rhemists*, against whom the judicious *Cartwright* is writing, maintain, that every man did utter his Sins particularly; but against this he advanceth two very considerable Reasons. “ 1. If they had made Con-
“ fession

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“ fession every one apart, he would have given
 “ his Prescription to every one apart, to every
 “ single Person, but that he doth not: But accor-
 “ ding to the general Order or Profession of Life
 “ wherein they did live ; to the *Publicans*, that
 “ which pertained to that State of Life ; to the
 “ *Soldiers*, that which was agreeable to their Cal-
 “ ling. 2. Because it was impossible for *John* to
 “ have heard all these Confessions particularly.”

But, after all, what will be the Consequence, if it should be for once allowed, that all of them did make Confession of particular Sins? Did ever *John* make any Enquiry into the State of their Souls, or delay their Baptism till they were in a Condition to give him the Signs of their Conversion, and the Working of God's Spirit on their Souls, so as he should be satisfied thereabout, before their solemn Admission? No. They were Baptised without Delay, or Loss of Time, even tho' they were a *Generation of Vipers*. Thus, he exhorted them to bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance ; but there is not the smallest Intimation, that he delay'd the Administration of Baptism unto them, till they should discover themselves to be true Saints and real Penitents. Nay, he only lays it upon them, to evidence the Profession they had made at their being baptised, by due and becoming Fruits of Repentance, that is, *Good Works*. From the whole, If *John Baptist* admitted Persons to be Members of the Visible Church, on the Profession of the true Religion, and Amendment of their Lives, it says, it is the standing Duty of Church Officers, to this Day, to follow his Practice.

And to support this Argument, let it further be considered, that the Apostles of Jesus Christ administered the Ordinance of Baptism to Persons, on their Profes-

Profession of the Christian Faith, without taking any previous Trial of them, or Examination of the Reality of Grace in their Hearts. Thus, we find, *Acts* 2. 38, 41. They Baptised, and so added to the Church Three thousand, on the same Day they made their Profession, without putting them off till an after Time, in order to make a diligent Trial into the Reality of Grace in their Souls; and indeed, considering the Greatness of the Number, there was sufficient Excuse to have deferred their Baptism for some Time, till they had made an Examination, if they had designed to favour any such Practice in after Ages. The Conversion of that vast Multitude being so very sudden, One may reasonably think, That if it had been the Design of our Lord, that none should be received in as Members of the Visible Church, till they give a previous Evidence of the Sincerity of Grace in their Souls, their Baptism would have been deferred till some after Time, and the Apostles made some particular Search and Examination of them for the Discovery thereof. But they acted after another Manner, and immediately, on their Profession of the Faith of Christ, without Delay administered unto them the initiating Ordinance of Baptism. The same was the Practice after the Preaching of the Gospel to the *Samaritans*, where Men and Women were received in as Members of the Visible Church, on their Profession of the Faith of the Gospel, and the Sacrament of Baptism administered unto them, without the least Intimation of a previous Trial or Examination, as to the Reality of Grace in their Hearts, *Acts* 8. 12. Nay, so far from this, that *Simon*, who, to that very Day, had been a Sorcerer, a Deceiver of the People by his Inchantments, and an impious Person above man-
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ny, was baptised among others, by *Philip*, on his first Profession of the true Religion. In a Word, it is not in the Power of any *Independent*, to adduce one single Instance from the Sacred Oracles, where-ever Baptism was refused to any who made Profession of the Gospel, and were desirous to be admitted to the External Privileges of the Christian Church, till a Trial was made of their being truly in a State of Grace, and Members of Christ; and much less, that every private Member of a Congregation was to be satisfied therein, before their Admission. This sudden Reception of Members into the Visible Church, by the Apostles, cannot be ascrib'd to the Extraordinary Gift of Discerning of Spirits, as if they were at once assured of their State of Conversion, and the Reality of Grace in all these whom they admitted by Baptism, to be Members of the Visible Church; for these Gifts that were peculiar to them, were not conferred by Way of Permanent *Habit*, so as that they could use them when they had a Mind, or exercise them on every Occasion: These were only given to these Holy Men of God, by Way of transient *Acts*, and immediate Blowings of the Divine Spirit: And it will be more than difficult to make good, that in this Particular, they were always infallibly directed, or in Matters of Fact, as to the Admission of Persons into the Visible Church, they were, at all Times, under the immediate Influences of the Holy Ghost, so as to know their inward State of Grace. If this had been true, then all those that were admitted by them, would have been inwardly Saints, and real Converts; whereas the Contrary is evident in many Instances. Besides, if it should be alledged, that it was not barely on the Profession of Persons that they were admitted, but

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as this was accompanied with some sensible and conspicuous Effects attending it, such as that, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* Yet it must be considered, that tho' there were some sensible Workings of the Spirit on the Hearts of these who were Received in the first Beginnings of Christianity; it will not thence follow, that this was the Case of every One, or Generality of the many Thousands that were baptised by the Apostles. This is but very seldom so much as insinuated in the Sacred History of the *New Testament*.

To conclude this Argument, it is worthy of Notice, what is said by the Apostle, *John 3. 26*. That our Lord baptised, namely by the Ministry of his Disciples, *and all Men came unto him*. From this it is evident, that he baptised Persons on their coming to him, and professing themselves his Followers, without putting them off till some after Time, in order they might be in some Condition to give visible Signs of their real Grace, and hearty Subjection to his Crown and Dignity. Now, after all these Things, shall frail Mortals be wiser than our Lord himself, and take upon them to be more rigid, careful and exact, in the Admission of Persons to be Members of the Visible Church, than the Adorable Head thereof himself, when in the Days of his Flesh he went about doing Good? There is a Spiritual Pride, which sometimes clouds itself with a Mask of Zeal; a remarkable Concern for the Things of God; which drives Persons to Singularities, and noisy Clamours in the Matters of Religion, while many Times it falls out, All this is more the Breath of their Mouths, than the undisguised Language of their Hearts.

From the Whole, I cannot perceive what can be objected against the Conclusiveness of this Argument,

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ment, in all its Branches, unless some shall be so incessantly fond of their own Notions, and wanting of that due Regard to the Sacred Oracles, as to say, The Sacrament of Baptism is not that which constitutes One a Member of the Visible Church. For tho' it be granted, that Baptism is not that which of itself gives a Being, or constitutes One's Right to be a Member of the Visible Church; yet still it is that Ordinance of Christ, whereby Persons ordinarily are initiate, and solemnly admitted to actual Fellowship and Communion with the Visible Body of their *Redeemer*. That which gives an adult Person a Right to be a Member, is a Profession of the true Religion; and as to Children, it is a federal Holiness, on Account of their Parents; but the solemn Initiation and publick Reception of such into the Bosom of the Visible Church, is the Sacrament of Baptism. And for any to refuse, that a Person duly baptized, on a serious Profession of Religion, is a Member of the Visible Church, he still continuing in the State in which he was, at his being made a Partaker of that external Seal of the Covenant, is to hold a Contradiction in Theology. For it must undeniably involve, that he who is a baptised Christian, or to whom the external Seal of the Covenant was administered on his Profession of the true Religion, is yet, in all Respects, among those that are without, a *Heathen* or *Pagan*, contrary to the exprefs Declaration of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 5. 10, 11.

Arg. 3. The next Argument we insist upon, is taken from the Description of the Visible Church given by Christ and his Apostles; and so she is compared to a *Draught-net*, cast into the Sea, that bringeth forth Fish both *good* and *bad*; to a *Field* where both *Wheat* and *Tares* grow up together;
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to a *House*, in which there are *Vessels*, some to *Honour*, and some to *Dis honour*; to a *Marriage Feast*, where there are *Guests* without the *Wedding Garment*, as well as others with it (a); in a *Word*, to a *Fold*, with a mixed *Flock*, both of *Sheep* and *Goats*. Now, this being the *State* of the *Visible Church*, as it is describ'd by our *Lord* and his *Apostles*, *namely*, a mixed *Society* of some truly *Godly* and *Gracious*, and some *unconverted* and *Graceless*; and *Christ* expressly declares, that it is his *Will*, That the *Office-bearers* of his *House*, should not attempt to make a *Separation* between the *Clean* and the *Unclean*, or cast out such as they reckon'd to be *Tares*, and only take *Care* of those whom they conceive to be *Wheat*, but leave that to his second *Coming* and *Appearance*; then it must undeniably follow, That it is not an *Institution* of *Christ*, that the *Rulers* of his *House*, should not receive in any to the *external Membership* of his *Church*, but such as are truly *Converts*, and interested in *Christ*, so far as possibly can be perceived: For it must be a certain *Truth*, that if it were the *Duty* of the *Office-bearers* of *Christ's Kingdom*, to reject every one from being admitted into the *Fellowship* of the *Visible Church*, but such as they were made to believe, from evident and positive *Signs*, were in a *State of Grace*; it were a plain *Case*, it was no less their *Duty* to reject and cast out of the *Church*, such as they were made to believe were in an *Unconverted State*, or only *Tares*, *Goats* and *Vessels*, not to the *Master's Use*, contrary to the express *Command* of *Christ*, where he declares the *Servant* to let them alone, and both
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(a) Matth. 13. 24. 47. 2 Tim. 2. 20. Matth. 21.

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grow up together till the Harvest. This leaves no Room for the Objection made by the *Independents*, That all this only points forth what the Church is in Fact, but not what she ought to be : For, tho' it is an undoubted Truth, that it is the Duty of all who make an External Profession of the Gospel, to be *Wheat*, and *Vessels* to the Master's Honour and Praise ; nay, every one who subjects himself to the Religion of Christ, stands bound to this, not only by Virtue of a Divine Command, but by his own Consent and Approbation ; yet it is expressly contrary to our Lord's Prohibition, that any should invade his Prerogative, and attempt to make a Separation, before he do it himself, when the Harvest shall come on. Besides, when the Spirit of God describes the Visible Body of the Redeemer, by these Terms, such as she is, and points forth the Members thereof, as a mixed Multitude, both of Good and Bad, it must be a plain Case, that he does not describe a Church made up of mere *Wheat*, or *Saints* ; and consequently, there is no such Church to be sought after, in this Side of Time, there being none such described by the Holy Ghost. In a Word, if the Visible Church, thus mixed of Good and Bad, is by Christ called the *Kingdom of Heaven*, a Name taken from the better Part ; it must be further manifest, that a Church may be a true Visible Church, in which such a Mixture is to be found. And it seems to carry in it a strange Tincture of Impudence, for any to deny the Name of *True Church*, to be ascribed to any Sacred Society, in which there is not a positive Certainty of all its Members being real Believers ; or to refuse it to a mixed Company, whom our Lord himself designs the *Kingdom of Heaven*. From all which it

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is easy to perceive, that there is no Weight in what is further objected by some, *namely*, that, according to this Doctrine, all profane and openly wicked Persons are to be counted Members of the Church, because they are *Tares*. For, tho' it be granted, that every Unbeliever and profane Person is among the Number of the *Tares*, and is a *Vessel* unprofitable to the Master, while he is such; yet it is refused, that these are only here to be understood; or, that even of these there may not come to be such, as the Master may be honoured by, thro' his Blessing on the External Means of Grace. The Parable expressly declares, that the *Tares* were such as could not be plucked up by his Servants, without Danger, and that it was not competent for any to undertake this Work, but he who is endued with an infinite Eye, and had an Exact Knowledge of the Secrets of Mens Hearts. And it is judiciously observed by the worthy Mr. Dickson, on *Mat.* 13. 24. That the External Visible Church may be deservedly call'd the *Kingdom of Heaven*, even in respect of its external Constitution in the World, and notwithstanding the many Hypocrites that are therein; because, it is here that Christ rules as a King, and hath his Subjects acknowledging him as such. He further observes, the rash Zeal of Servants, before they consult their Lord and Master, is ready, with the Hazard of the Church, and true Members thereof, to have such a Constitution in the Visible Body, as if they should suffer none to be a Member, who is not inwardly regenerate. But the Lord, tho' he hath given command to censure scandalous Offenders; yet he discharges his Servants to press towards such a Separation, as to have all Weeds, or wicked unrenewed Persons cast out; lest, while they gather out the *Tares*, they
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should, at the same Time, pluck up the *Wheat* with them: For it is not possible for any finite Mind to make an exact Separation of the Graceless from the Gracious, without Mistake. The fore-named worthy Person has much to the same Purpose, on that Chapter.

Arg. 4. If none are to be admitted Members of the Visible Church, till they be able to give Signs of their Conversion; then it must undeniably follow, that it is not the Design of God by his Church, that Persons should be brought within her Pale, that they may be converted; but only to build up such as are already brought in to Christ, and united to him by Faith. But this, at once, may appear to be contrary to the very Design of a Visible Church; for the very Supposition of such a Doctrine, makes none to be the proper Charge of the Ministry, till once they be Converted; and so, in a great Measure, oversets the Design of Christ's giving a publick Ministry; which was, for *Perfecting* the Number of the *Saints*, or Gathering in of his *Chosen*, as well as the *Edification* or Building up of the Mystical Body of the Redeemer*. To set this Argument in its full Force, let it be considered,

1. That the Ministry and all the Ordinances of Christ, particularly the Preaching of the Word, was ordained, by him, to be the Ordinary Means for Converting of Sinners to himself, as well as advancing and Building up his Members in the most holy Faith, till they all come to perfect Men in him. Thus, *Prov. 9. 3, 4. Wisdom hath sent forth her Maidens, she crieth upon the high Places of the City, who so is simple, let him turn in hither. As for him that wanteth Understanding, she saith to him, Come eat of my Bread, and drink of the Wine which I have*

* Ephes 4. 11, 12.

of the Christian Church. 131

I have mingled. Now, What is the Meaning of all this? But, according to the Mind of the best Interpreters, That the Ministry of Christ, here called *Wisdom's Maidens*, had it in their Commission to invite such as were *simple*, and *had no Understanding*, that is, as were yet void of Spiritual Grace and Wisdom, to embrace Christ, and subject themselves to the Doctrine of the Gospel: And so it evidently appears, That the Ministry, and Preaching of the Gospel, is an Ordinance in the Church of Christ, for the Conversion of Sinners. This is further manifest, in that the Apostle expressly determines, that Ministers are *Ambassadors for Christ*, and by them God beseeches Sinners to be *reconciled to himself**, that is, to bring them from a State of Enmity, to that of Peace and Reconciliation with God. And indeed, if a Standing Ministry, and the Dispensation of the Gospel by them, were not the Ordinary Means of Conversion, the same Apostle's Reasoning was not good, when he says, *How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a Preacher? And how shall they Preach, except they be sent?* So then, *Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God*, Rom. 10. 14, 15, 17. Thus, it must be an undeniable Truth, that the Conversion and bringing in of Persons to Christ, is, according to the Divine Constitution, brought about by the Ministry of the Word, and the regular Sending forth of Pastors to proclaim his Message; unless any should be *so far* Enemies to the Truth, and take Part with the *Arminians*, *Socinians* and other Adversaries to a Gospel Ministry, as to assert, That the *Sent Preacher* is no other but a gifted Brother,

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* 2 Cor. 5. 20.

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and does not import One set apart to bear a Sacred Office, against whom there is enough said elsewhere.

2. According to the Principles of the *Independents*, the Members of the Visible Church are supposed already converted, before their Admission to be Members thereof; and so, the Consequence is plain, That a Minister or Pastor, as such, is not concerned in the Conversion, but only in the Building up of those already united to Christ. He that has only the Charge of a Company of such as he is positively assured are in a State of Grace, so far as possibly he can discern, is not concerned with the Conversion of these, but only their Edification and Building up. And that which makes this yet the more demonstrative against the *Independents*, is, that it is their received Principle, That a Minister, as a Minister, cannot perform Ministerial Acts, but unto a particular constitute Visible Church; which, according to them, is to be look'd upon, from convincing Evidences, to be in a State of Grace; so a Minister or Ministers, and a particular Visible Church, are *Relata*. Thus, all Ministerial Acts performed by them, but unto this One Flock, to which they bear a Relation, and from which they received their Powers, are not as Ministers, but private Persons. And so, tho' an *Infidel* should be converted by one of these Pastors, it is only by Accident, and not as a Minister, whose only Concern is, to build up those that are Converted. Besides, tho' any one in his own Congregation should be Unconverted, and by his Ministry brought to a State of Grace, yet still it was only by Accident; seeing, if he had been conscious of any Person in his Flock his not being in Christ, he would not have been received in as a Member;
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and the evident Discovery of any of them to be Unbelievers after Admission, would, on their Principles, justly have secluded them that Society. Thus, if the Conversion of Persons is only by Accident, and not the Office of Pastors, as such, it must infallibly say, That it was not the Design of our Lord's constituting a standing Ministry in his Church, to Convert and Bring in Sinners to himself; and so Ministers of the Gospel, as such, have no Call to preach such Doctrines, as have a Tendency to influence Persons to Humiliation, give them a Sight of themselves, their Need of Christ, and engage them to fall in with the Way of Salvation; but only to preach the Promises, Privileges and Encouragements thereof. For all their Design must be, to quicken and influence their Flock, as a Company of Redeemed Ones, to Sweetness of Communion with Christ, and one with another; and so farewell with being Ambassadors for Christ, and *beseeking Sinners to be reconciled to God*. I cannot miss thinking, any Unprejudiced Person will easily perceive the Grossness of this Absurdity, and how Naturally it follows from *Independent Principles*.

3. If this shall be rejected as absurd, and the Truth embraced, as to the Design of Christ in giving a standing Ministry in his Church, for the Conversion and Bringing in of Sinners to himself, no less than building up those already converted; then the native Consequence will be, That it is not a necessary Qualification, antecedent to a Person's being a Member of the Visible Church, to be in Christ and a State of Conversion, or to give such manifest Evidences thereof, as may determine the several Members of the Church, that he is truly Regenerate. The refusing of this Consequence,

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must, at once, establish the opposite Error; and there is no other Medium from what is to be learn'd from *Independent Principles*. For, on Supposition, that a Visible Church is made up of none but what are supposed to be converted before their Admission into it, and that a Visible Church was before a Standing and Ordinary Ministry, and from her it was they received their Powers, and that there are no Pastors but in a constitute Church; what is the native Inference, but that the Conversion of Sinners, was at first by private Persons, and not Pastors or Ambassadors for Christ, and so this was not the Design of a Standing Ministry. And it will be of no Avail for them to alledge, That the Materials out of which their Churches are made up, are such as were converted by Ministers in other Congregations; for this does not come up to the Point of Principle, but only speaks of Matters of Fact. Besides, either these Congregations out of which they receive their Members, were such as were truly and rightly constitute, or not. If they were, then still it supposes they were converted before they came under the Inspection of such Pastors. If they were brought from under the Inspection of such as were not true Ministers, and Churches not rightly constitute, then still the Consequence remains, their Conversion was owing to private Persons, and that great Work is not the Design of a standing ordinary Ministry. I cannot see what can be objected to this Argument, unless a New Gospel should be found out, to furnish us with one Order of Church Officers, whose Business is, only to convert, and another who are only concern'd to build up those already Converted. For, in the whole *New Testament*, there is not the least Insinuation of any such Distinction.

Arg.

Arg. 5. The exprefs Command of the Gofpel feems to oppofe the *Independent* Way of Gathering Churches. It is requir'd, that we fhould bear with the *Infirmities of the Weak*: Beware of *ftumbling* and *offending* fuch; *to reftore fuch as are overtaken in a Fault, in the Spirit of Meeknefs*; *to comfort the feeble minded, fupport the Weak, and be patient towards all Men* (a). From this we infer, with equal Force of Reason, That there ought to be the fame Tendernefs fhown to thofe who offer themfelves to join the Vifible Church, that there is to fuch who are already Members. If Weakneffes and Faults are to be born with in thofe who are already Members of the Vifible Church, it would feem, that even much more it ought to be fhown to thofe who are yet without, but become willing to fubject themfelves to the Ordinances of Chrift; becaufe they have not enjoy'd thefe Advantages, by which they might have been bettered, and brought off from the Errors of their Ways, as thofe who are already Members. Befides, the receiving of fuch, is the moft effectual Method, under God, to refrain them from Extravagancies and grofs Impieties. What is fo equal for this End, as to be under the ftated Means of Grace, and due Exercife of Discipline? For fuch as are without, are not fubject thereunto. And it is a Matter beyond Exception, that the Preaching of the Gofpel, and the Exercife of Discipline on Perfons, according to Chrift's Prefcription, which only can be in a ftated Way, nay, in any Way, on thofe who are within, is that which civilizes a Nation or Kingdom, beyond all the other Laws of the World. For, fays the Apoftle, *What have I to do to judge them that are without.*

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out. And so, it is not only the design'd Method of bringing in the Elect to Christ, but a standing Ministry has a manifest Tendency to civilize others, and make Human Society more comfortable than what otherwise it would be. But, the *Independent* Scheme should, at once, open a Door to all Manner of Vice, so as such as had a Design after Lasciviousness in Judgment and Practice, should reign without Controul. And what the Consequences of this should be, both to Sacred and Civil Society, I leave to the Unprejudiced to judge.

Arg. 6. And it follows, in some Part, on the former, These Principles, which have a manifest Tendency to open a Door for Hypocrites, and shut it against many of these who may be the Elect of God, and even such who may have some Beginnings of Grace in them, cannot be authoris'd of Christ. The main Design and principal End of all the Means of Grace is, for the gathering in of the Elect, that they may obtain Salvation (*a*). And it was the great Concern of our Lord, and ought to be no less that of his Ambassadors, to take Care not to *quench the smoking Flax*, and *receive those that are weak in Faith*. Now, is it to be imagined, that the Publick Ordinances, being the Ordinary Means of Salvation, should be so closely shut up, that many of the Elect, and such as we may probably conclude to be such, or to have some Beginnings of Grace in them, cannot have free Access to the Care and Inspection of the Ministry of Christ. In these Things we complain of the *Independent* Way of Admission of their Members, and look upon them to be very opposite to the Institution of Christ. For, their Way of Admission is not Proof against a guilded Hypocrite, who may have a great Deal

(*a*) 2 Tim. 2. 10.

Deal of Head Knowledge, speak eloquently on the Truths of Religion, have Assurance to an Excess, in giving an Account of the Method of God's Dealing with Sinners in Conversion, and not want Presumption enough to apply them all to his own Case. In this Case, there is none on Earth can be Judge; and he must unquestionably be received, having answer'd all the Formality of their Admission. But then, there is another who has a Willingness to join in Fellowship with the Visible Church, and subject himself to Ordinances, whom none dare say, but he is among the Elect of God, and his present Willingness gives a probable, tho' no positive Ground for it; yet, unless he can give the Signs of his Conversion, and positive Evidences of the Workings of the Spirit of Grace on his Soul, to the Satisfaction of all the Members of the Church, so as they can, in Charity, look on him as a Believer, he cannot be admitted under the Inspection and Care of the Ministry, and to enjoy the Ordinances of Christ dispensed by them. Again, there may be some, in whom there are the Beginnings of Grace, and who, indeed, are *Smoaking Flaxes*; and yet they are weak in Knowledge, not capable to give any distinct Account of the Fundamental Principles of Religion; and, it may be, under many sensible and sinful Infirmities; which makes it difficult for any to pass a Judgment upon them, so as to determine themselves positively as to their being in a State of Grace, and the *Epistle of Christ*. Now, such Persons cannot be admitted to the Benefit of Publick Ordinances, or to be Members of the Visible Church: And thus, the presumptuous Hypocrite is within; and the poor *Smoaking Flax* is left in the Condition of *Pagans* and *Infidels*.

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And tho' it may be objected, that even *Infidels* and *Pagans* are not debarred from Hearing the Word; yet all this is but a noisy Sound, without any Thing to the Purpose. For, a Pastor, as such, among the *Independents*, is only so, in relation to his particular Flock of Redeemed Ones, or Visible Saints; and consequently, as a Pastor, it is only to these he preacheth the Gospel, which requires his Sermons to be adapted to the supposed State of his Hearers. Thus, as a Person in Office, and Ambassador of Jesus Christ, he is not called to preach any Thing, but what is suited to these whose eyes are opened, and have the spiritual Sense of Discerning; and so is not called to bring any Thing forth, that is adapted to the Case of the Unconverted, and * Authoritatively preach unto *Heathens* and *Infidels*. And if any shall pretend, that the Pastor, as such, is to deliver what is agreeable to a Congregation of Saints, and, as a Gifted Brother, he may speak something to the Condition of those that are without, it is but to make the Absurdity so much the Greater, and make an ordinary Pastor or Minister of the Word, to preach Authoritatively to some, and as a private Person unto others, at the same Time; which is void of all Countenance from the Sacred Oracles. For the *New Testament* gives no Countenance to any standing Officers, who are impowered to preach in Christ's Name, for perfecting of the Saints, the Work of the Ministry, and edifying the Body of Christ, but Pastors and Doctors, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. Nay, even Pastors, as such, have it in Commission to convert

Sinners

* S. e. Separatists Confess. Art. 34, 35. Page 26.---- Conversion is ordinarily wrought by private Christians that have the Gift of Prophecy. publicly, and yet are not Pastors; for private Christians do gather the Church, &c.

Sinners, no less than to build up the Saints ; for they are set forth to be Under-suiters to gain the Bride's Consent to Jesus Christ, and the *Weapons* of their *Warfare* are mighty through God, to the pulling down of the strong Holds of Unbelief, the casting down of Imaginations, and every high Thought that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God ; and to bring into Captivity, the Soul of the obstinate Sinner, to the Obedience of Christ, (a). Besides, the Object and Matter about which a Pastor, as such, is concern'd, is, not only to build up the Converted, but to seek after, and gather in them that are lost (b) ; and indeed, there can be nothing more clearly included in the Pastoral Office, than, that its Design is to open the Eyes of the Blind, to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God, that they may receive Forgiveness of Sins, Acts 26. 18. In a Word, I would gladly know, if the Pastors of *Ephesus*, to whom the feeding of that Flock was committed (c), were not impowered to convert the *Infidels* that were among them, and even preach, as Pastors, to these that were yet in a State of Darkness, that they might be brought within Christ's Fold ? Or, if the Apostle gave Commission to any others to Convert, or Allowance to private Persons, publickly to prophesie or preach to the Unconverted for that End ; and none of these were under the actual Inspection of the several Bishops whom the Apostle set apart in that Church, till they could give Signs of their Conversion, tho' willing to subject themselves to publick Ordinances ? This is a Doctrine unheard of in the *New Testament*.

Again,

(a) 1 Cor. 10. 4. 5. (b) Ezek. 34. 4. (c) Acts 20. 17. 28.

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Again, if it shall be objected, That they are willing to receive in Persons to external Membership, upon the smallest Evidences of Christ in them ; and so there is no great Danger of quenching the *Smoking Flax*, and that the Keeping out of Persons in whom there is no Appearance of real Grace, is not, in any Degree hazardous. But here it would be considered, that according to their own Principles, there can be no Admission, without something to be a Foundation of a positive Judgment of a Person's being renewed by the Spirit of God. Will they receive in a Person, on a sober, serious Profession of the true Religion, or Doctrine of the Gospel, or Willingness to subject themselves to all the Ordinances of Christ's Church. If this be granted, the Dispute would be at an End. But will all this be a sufficient Bottom for a positive Judgment, as to a Person's Gracious State and renewed Condition? So, still it remains as evident as ever, That real Converts who cannot make Language of their Case, nay, are not sensible of their own State, so as to discover it, must be kept from being within the Verge of the Visible Church ; tho' desirous of being under a standing Ministry, and the Pastoral Care of some Church Officer. I cannot help thinking, That it were much safer for a Hundred Hypocrites to be let in, rather than One Gracious Soul to be rejected, or kept out, or even those that we might have but probable Grounds to believe God's Design of Grace towards them, from their declared Willingness to subject themselves to all the Ordinances of the Redeemer's House. And, to conclude this Argument, He that can handsomly play the Hypocrite, must be reputed a Real Saint ; and these whom Christ will own in the Great Day, to have

have been Members of his Mystical Body, must all their Lifetime be reputed among the Number of the Heathenish World ; seeing many such are not capable to give Signs of their Conversion, even till the Day of their Death.

Arg. 7. Upon Supposition, that the Visible Church was to be made up only of such as were truly Godly, and that it was only upon the positive Evidences of this, that any Person can be admitted into Church Membership ; then the Undeniable Consequence of this must be, that upon a Person's Discovery of Himself (after he is a Visible Member) to be in a State of Unbelief, he is to be cast out of the Visible Church, and put in the State of *Heathens* and *Pagans*. The Consequence is most Natural, from *Independent* Principles ; for it being the positive Evidences of a Regenerate State, that entitles any Person to external Church Privileges, and warrants the Rulers of the Church to receive any into Fellowship and Communion with them in all Christian Ordinances ; that which naturally follows from this, is, That a Person's giving as positive Evidences of his Non-regeneracy after his Admission, as he could do of his Regeneracy before his Admission, he must immediately be secluded from Church Membership. It is a certain Case, That, that which gave a Person a Title to be a Member, and Right to Church Privileges, the Removal thereof must, at once, say, he is divested of that Title and Right ; and so, a Person's giving Evidences, as much as the Nature of the Thing will bear, that he is in an Unconverted State after he is within the Church, must as really deprive him of a Title and Right, as it would have done before his Admission. And if any shall alledge, That
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none are capable to judge of a Person's being in a State of Non-regeneracy, by all the Discoveries they can afterwards make, the Answer is easy, That as little are they capable to judge positively of a Person's State of Regeneracy before his Admission; and so there is an End of the *Independent* Way of gathering Churches. And indeed, I cannot help thinking, that it is equally hard for any Person or Church, to judge positively of a Person's Unregenerate State, before he is a Member of the Church, and so refuse his Admission; as it will be to form the same Judgment on such as are admitted, and discover afterwards all the Signs of Non-regeneracy, that he who is refused visible Membership, possibly can do. Thus then, all such as afterwards discover themselves, when Members, to be in a State of Nature, must be laid under the Sentence of Excommunication, or cast out from being Members of that Church into which they were received; but this is without all Foundation in the Word of God; and consequently, the Principles from which it naturally flows. For the Sacred Oracles give not the least Intimation, that the amazing Sentence of Excommunication is to be inflicted on any, save for Obstinacy in Opinion, or Heretical Doctrines; and being irreclaimable from Scandalous Practices; or, at most for Hainous and Heaven daring Impieties: In all which Cases, there is no Difference whether the Person is accounted Regenerate, or only in a State of Nature. Now, if there is no Foundation in the Sacred Oracles, or a Warrant to eject Persons out of the Visible Church, for their being in a State of Non-regeneracy; there must be, equally, as little for rejecting any from being admitted a Member of the Visible Church, tho' in a State

of Nature, on their sober and seemingly serious Profession of the true Religion, and Willingness to subject themselves to all the Ordinances of Christ's House. This is a *Negative* Argument; and considering it is in Point of Right, and what is allowable by a Divine and positive Law, it is most Conclusive: For, if a Thing be not commanded or written in the Divine Oracles, it must naturally follow, it ought not to be practised. Besides, I cannot miss thinking, That this Consequence being Natural, gives a very clear Discovery, that the Antecedent or Principles from whence it floweth, are not from God, or the Fruit of the Divine Spirit. And indeed, the very Consideration of this, That none are to be admitted Members of the Visible Body of Christ, but such as are real Saints, by all that Men are capable to judge from positive Evidences, and that many of those that have Grace, and cannot discover it to the Conviction of others, are not admitted, nor such as make a seemingly serious Profession of the true Religion; and, on the other Hand, such as come to be made manifest, that they are void of Grace, when in the Bosom of the Church, must, on that Account, be ejected, tho' they are not contumacious to the Church, but obsequious to its Discipline, the Consequence must be evident, that the incomparably smallest Number of those who are called Protestants, shall be within the Pale of the Visible Church; and so here is a vast Body of Men and Women, left to wander without a Pastor, to live as they list, without the Means of Grace to restrain and reclaim them from the Error of their Ways. Thus, in a short Time, Satan and his Instruments should triumph; Antichrist and his Emissaries make a plentiful Harvest,

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vest, to the Support and Enlargement of his Kingdom; and, at last, being more than able to overspread the Nations, should soon reduce the Reformed Churches, and bring them under an absolute Tyranny. Nay, the setting such a Course of Management on Foot, in this Kingdom, were, of all others, to give the freest Access, and fairest Opportunities to the Reintroduction of Popery through all the Parts of the Island, and the rendring its spreading Unavoidable. I shall not say, that this is the Intendment of all those who are *Independents*; yet it is a Matter beyond Question to me, that it is the native Fruit of their Principles; and how consistent these are, with the Safety of Civil Government, I leave to the unprejudiced Considerer to judge.

Arg. 8. It is not committed to any Man, or Society of Persons, judicially to Cognosce on the spiritual State of every Professor of the Gospel, and determine them to be in a State of Grace; or, according to contrary Evidences, declare them to be in a State of Nature; and so, not to be received as Members of the Visible Church. There is nothing more clear, than, that the Rulers of the Church are impowered authoritatively to determine as to Person's outward Actions, whether Sinful and Scandalous, or not; and to inflict a proper Censure accordingly: But, to make a positive Judgment, as to the inward State of Men, whether converted or not, and according as they apprehend it to be with them, to admit them, or debar them from being Members of the Visible Church, is without all Rule in the *New Testament*. This is what God has still reserved to himself as his own Prerogative, and which he discovers in a secret Way, in the Court of Men's Consciences,
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by his Word and Spirit, according to the good Pleasure of his Will, and, at the End of Time, will manifest this Power, with a scrupulous Exactness, before Angels and Men, when he shall separate the Sheep from the Goats. But, that any Society of Persons should judge of the spiritual and secret State of any Man, is contrary to the express Command of the Apostle: *Why dost thou judge thy Brother? Or, Why dost thou set at nought thy Brother? We shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Let us not therefore judge one another any More**. This must unquestionably be understood, of the Judgment made of the secret State of Persons, and not merely of outward Actions, which may be examined and judged of, according to many Gospel Rules and Precepts. Now, if it be not allowable for any Society of Men to judge of the secret and spiritual State of any Person; then it must be undeniable, that it is not the Institution of Christ, that before any can be admitted Members of the Visible Church, they are to be judged of as truly converted, and effectually called; seeing this is a plain judging of their spiritual and secret State. And it seems a plain Case, that if our Lord had ever designed any such Practice should obtain in the Christian Church, there would have been a Rule, for that End, express somewhere in the *New Testament*; or, at least, discovering the lowest Degree of Evidence, on which Persons were to be admitted to Christian Fellowship. For it is not conceivable, that God should have ordained, that only Persons so and so qualified, should be received in as Members of the Visible Church; and others, for the Want of these, debarred; and, that the Church

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should

* Rom. 14. 10, 13.

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should have a Power to determine positively as to the State of every Professor, and yet have left all this to the Will of Men, without circumscribing them in a Matter of such Consequence. And indeed, considering the different Sizes of Believers among themselves, the manifold Infirmities and Weaknesses of many of those who are Gracious in this militant State, together with the Glaring Appearances of Hypocrites, it would require a very precise and ample Rule to determine the Church, in their Management, in such a critical Point. Nay, if there had been such a precise Determination in this Matter, as did but express indefinitely, *He that is to be admitted Member of the Visible Church, and to be under the stated Care and Inspection of a Pastor, must have some Degrees of Knowledge in the Fundamentals of Religion, and Experience of the Power and Efficacy of God's Spirit on his Soul, to the giving him a true Sight of Sin, and the Need of Christ*; Persons might, with Confidence, have pled this Cause: But while there is nothing of this in Scripture, as to visible Membership, all that can be said, is to no Purpose. And indeed, when it is considered, That Regeneration and Conversion are secret in the Heart, and the inward Work of the Spirit; That the outward Actions of Men, whether they flow from a Principle of Grace, are the Fruit of Love, and to the Glory of God, or not, so far as Man can observe, may be counterfeit; That the fewest Number of Converts are eminent Saints, but subject to manifold Weaknesses, Sins and Infirmities: It seems a Matter wholly impossible for any Society of Men, of the quickest Penetration, to pass a Sentence on this Critical and Momentous Point, *Converted or Not*. We do not refuse, That the Sa-

cred Oracles contain all the Evidences and necessary Characteristicks, by which a Person, in Consequence of the Divine Command, may examine his own State, and, by comparing himself with the Rule, may come to a satisfying Resolution as to his own Condition; but, that there is any such Command given to others to judge, examine and try the State and Condition of any particular Person, so as to pass a Judgment of his being in a renewed or converted State, and lay this down as a stated Method of Admission into the Visible Church, is denied, as being Antiscriptural. Nor is there any Foundation for such a Practice, either from the Authoritative Determination of Ministers in preaching and applying the Word to different Sorts of Persons to which they address themselves and deliver the Mind of God; because all this is but Doctrinal, as to the Explication of any Part of Sacred Writ; and the bearing Home of these Truths by Way of Practical Improvement, goes upon the supposed State and different Conditions of the Hearers; whereas, a particular Sentence past, as to the State of this Individual Man or Woman, determinately by Name, they may be received or not received; because the One has the Signs of Grace, and not the Other, is a Thing of a quite different Nature. This Power we refuse to be lodged with the Church, till a Divine Warrant can be produced for it.

Arg. 9. Independent Principles, in their own Nature, seclude Children of professing Christian Parents from being Members of the Visible Church, seeing these are nowise capable to give an Account of their Faith, Knowledge, or the Workings of God's Spirit on their Souls. This we look

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upon to be inconsistent with the Nature and Design of Baptism, which is a solemn Initiation of Persons to Church Membership, as Circumcision was under the *Old Testament*. And indeed, however some *Independents* allow Children to be of the Matter of the Visible Church, yet their Principles are justly chargeable with being Enemies to *Infant Baptism*.

Arg. 10. Omitting many Arguments that might, at great Length, have been insisted upon, reckoning what is said to be sufficient, I shall conclude with an Under-proof taken from the Fathers, who all agree, That the Visible Church is made up of such as profess the True Religion, and is a Company made up of both good and bad. This is agreed to by *Austin, Cyprian, Gregory, Chrysostom, Nazianzen, Eusebius, Ireneus, Tertullian*, with many Others mentioned by Mr. *Rutherford* (a), together with the Whole Body of our Reformers, who all define the Visible Church from the outward Profession of the true Christian Faith or Religion, and External Communion in the Worship and Ordinances of God: But never from an inward Holiness and Heart Conversion. To these I shall add, That *Origen* against *Celsus*, in several Passages mentioned by the Learned and justly admir'd, the *Author* of the *Constitution of the Primitive Church* (b), &c. clearly discovers, That all that was judg'd necessary to an Adult Person's being admitted Member of the Visible Church, was their serious Profession of Christianity, and Acquaintance with its first Principles, after they had been some Time *Catechumeni*, or Catechised Ones. Agreeable to this he saith, *We initiate them*

them into our Mysteries, when they have made a Profession of Holiness, and, according to the utmost of their Power, have reformed their Conversation. That is, saith the Learned Author before mentioned, When they had changed their Manners, and rectified their irregular Carriages, they were washed with the Water of Baptism.

To the same Purpose *Justin Martyr* speaketh (a) when treating on the Celebration of the Lord's Supper; for, to the Admission of Persons to that Ordinance, there was required a *Profession of the Faith in the Truths of the Gospel, and an answerable Life thereto, without which it was not lawful to partake of the Holy Supper.* And it is very plain from *Cyprian* (b), that those, who are once baptized, were still look'd upon as Members of the Church, and such as had a Right to all its Privileges, except they had fallen into some Gross and Scandalous Sins, for which they were incapacitate, till they gave Discovery of their Penitency and Sorrow for their Impieties: For, no sooner were they baptized, than they commenced Members of the Catholick Church Visible, and of that particular Church in which that Ordinance was dispensed to them. Now, if Persons were admitted to the Lord's Supper, on a Profession of the Truths of the Gospel, and a suitable Conversation to that Profession; and all such as were baptized, and thereafter were kept from scandalous Sins, had a Right to all the Privileges of the Christian Church; then we may clearly perceive, That the Foundation of their Admission into the Church, and being Partakers of all its Ordinances, was, an external Visible Profession, and blameless Conversation.

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(a) A¹ol 3. Page 97. Edit. Paris, 1636. (b) Epist. 63.

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And indeed, if we shall not rest in a serious visible Profession, as the Ground of Persons having Right to the Privileges of the Gospel Covenant, or Ordinances belonging thereto, but demand positive Evidences of Grace in every One who is admitted thereunto, *in foro humano*, it is not easy to conceive, how that any Minister can, in Safety, administer Ordinances to any Society of Men, particularly those which are sealing: For, it is a plain Case, that every Minister who is to dispense Ordinances to a People, must proceed on certain Grounds, that every one whom he admits, has a Right to the Ordinance about to be dispensed: But, on Supposition, that positive Signs of Grace are the Foundation of every Man's Right, it is impossible that any Man can proceed on a positive Certainty, unless it can be made appear, that Ministers have, at this Time of Day, an infallible Knowledge of every one's Spiritual State: Therefore, as that which gives any Person a Right to external Privileges, must be something manifest to him who admits them to Ordinances, if it be laid upon him to enquire after it; so, if the Matter to be enquired into, is the Evidence of One's Right to Ordinances, and this Right is saving *Grace, or the hidden Man of the Heart*, how is it possible the Minister can proceed, in a Safety to his Conscience, or a Consistency with his Duty,

If any shall alledge, That positive Signs of Grace are only demanded, in order to be Evidences of a true and visible Profession; and it is a visible Profession, thus circumstantiate, that gives the Right: Yet it must be remembred, that our Uncertainty, in this Case, is every Whit as great as before. For it is a plain Matter, that no Man can have more Certainty of a Conclusion deduced from

from Premises, than he can have of the Premises themselves. But it is certain, in the present Instance, the Premises from whence a Man's being a true visible Professor is drawn, are his having a Work of Grace in his Heart; but if a Man cannot freely, and on positive certain Evidence, assent to this Antecedent, how can he have it of the Conclusion, he is a true visible Professor? This is the plain Result of such a Way of reasoning. But, such as rest on this positive Evidence for Admission, and giving a Right to Gospel Ordinances, *namely*, a sincere outward Profession of the Gospel, accompanied with a competent Measure of Knowledge, and not attended with manifest Scandal, he has something to fix upon; and a clear Bottom for admitting any Person to visible Privileges on visible Signs, of which he is capable to judge. This is a Notion exactly suited to a Visible Church, in this State of Things, which can only be distinguished from others in the World, from the outward Appearance she makes in it, and not from the inward and hidden Part, only known to God himself.

And as for what is further objected, *namely*, That an explicate Covenant Engagement, from all the Members of a Congregation, is that which is necessary to give it a visible Form and Being as a Church. It is answered, that if by this is meant, that an express Owning of the Gospel Covenant was necessary, in the first making up the Form of a Visible Church, it is readily granted: For, were any living in the midst of *Heathens* and *Pagans*, who had the pure Ordinances of God dispensed to them, it were necessary for these to demand such an explicate Profession and Engagement, from those who offered to assemble

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and join with them, for the Participation of Gospel Ordinances. Nay, were there a considerable Body of Men in any Kingdom, labouring after a Reformation from Popery, it were the Duty of such to engage in the Way of exprefs Covenant, to stand for one another, and perform all mutual Offices for obtaining this End; and, at the same Time, to receive none into their Number but such as engaged this Way, and gave their explicate Consent to the Gospel Covenant: For, what is the Duty of a Congregation, in such Cases, is the Duty of many such, on the same Grounds.

Besides, if it be meant, that it is a Duty incumbent on all and every one to whom the Gospel Covenant is made known, to join with some Church Society or Worshipping Assembly; and because it is not revealed in Scripture, to what particular Church he is to join himself, he ought to signify to that Assembly, wherewith he inclines to join, his Willingness to be a Member thereof, either by Actions or exprefs Words, I have no Quarrel with it neither. Or, if there should be a particular Enquiry made into such as are baptized in Infancy, about their Knowledge of the Principles they are solemnly bound to maintain by Virtue thereof, and as to the Suitableness of their Practices, before they should be admitted to the more solemn Ordinance of the Supper, I shall never be in the least offended on that Account, but the Contrary. Nor shall I ever be against any proper Measures for restraining Vice, and advancing the Knowledge of the Gospel, by an explicate and open Profession of their Submission to the Rules thereof. All this may have its own Advantages, and be conducive to the Ends of the Gospel.

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But, if the Meaning be, that a formal and explicate Covenant, between a Company of Visible Professors, is absolutely necessary to the Being and Form of a Church, so as that, without this be explicitly entred into, none can have Access into that Assembly, or be Partakers of all Gospel Ordinances with them, I must freely own, I cannot assent to it. For, *First*, There may be a Real Confederation, without a formal and explicate Consent, as is manifest in many of the Primitive Churches; and in these since the Reformation; which no sober Mind will refuse to have been both True and Visible Churches. *2dly*. I cannot assent to this, because One who is truly entred into the Gospel Covenant, has thereby a Title to all the Ordinances belonging thereunto; and consequently, explicate Covenanting is not that which constitutes one a Member. He who is baptised according to the Command of Christ, has, thereby, a sealed Right to all the external Privileges belonging to that Covenant, of which Baptism is a Seal. For, how is it conceivable, That the Seal of the Gospel Covenant should be administered to One who is not a Member of that Society to which the Covenant belongs? And how is it to be imagined, that One is a Member to whom Baptism is administered, and yet he has not thereby a Sealed Right to the external Privileges thereof? A Right once received, continues till it be forfeited by some Deed or Action of the Person; which is the only Thing can restrict him either in Whole or in Part, according to the Nature of the Offence. And for any to imagine, that by Baptism One is declared to be a Member of the Catholick Church, but not of any particular Congregation, is very vain: For, tho' One may be supposed to be baptised in such Cir-

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Circumstances, as that he could not actually be denominate a Member of this or the other Congregation; yet still he must have a Right to join to one or other of these, where he may have Opportunity, and to partake of all the Ordinances belonging to that Covenant, of which Baptism is a Seal, unless we can suppose One to be a Member of the Whole Body, and yet neither actually belongs to any Part of it, nor has a Right to join to any Branch of that Sacred Society, for being Partaker of its Privileges; which, to me, has much the Face of a Contradiction. 3dly. Because there may be a real Consent given, by the Acts and Deeds of a Person, that he has actually subjected himself to the Gospel Covenant, without any formal and explicate entring into a Congregational Engagement, in Conjunction with others, to perform mutual and relative Duties. And, as a Church may cease to be a true Church, without any explicate disowning such an Engagement; so a real and true Church may be Constitute without it; And consequently, a formal Engagement, and explicate entring into a Congregational Covenant, is not that which constitutes the Essence and Being of a Church. Thus, the Church of *Rome* has manifestly corrupted the Word and Sacraments, and cannot deserve the Name of a true Church; yet still she maintains the Name in the strongest Terms. So, on the other Hand, a Person may declare himself to be a Worthy Member by his Deeds and Actions; and another, by his unsuitable Carriage, clearly discover he has no Claim to be a Member, or a Right to Gospel Privileges.

I shall only subjoin to what hath been said, a short Reply to the most common Objections or Arguments of the *Independents*. And,

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First. It is objected, That the Church of Christ is denominated *the Temple of God*, Ephes. 2 22. His Building in which he dwells, 2 Cor. 6. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. And the Members thereof bear the Name of Saints, and faithful in Christ, &c. But, 1. I'm afraid, if these Topicks should prove any Thing to the Purpose, they must Unquestionably prove too much, *namely*, That there are none can be admitted Members of the Visible Church, but such as are Real Believers, and Living Stones in Christ's Building; but such Kind of Arguments prove nothing at all: Besides, these Scriptures prove nothing against us, till once it be made appear, that these Epithets are given to the Church as Visible; But this would be more than difficult, seeing it is manifest they are to be understood of, and can only be predicate concerning the Invisible Church of Real Saints. It is indeed true, that the Papists maintain, that such Scriptures are meant of the Visible Church, because this Notion is more suited to their Political Views; but the Contrary has still been held by the Current of Reformed Divines. 2. These Scriptures, 1 Cor. 3. are impertinently alledged; for they are not adduced by the Apostle for that Purpose, which is intended by our Adversaries on this Point. The Inspired Penman is there speaking of Fundamental Doctrines, and these that are built thereon, which ought to be correspondent thereto, and of a Piece with the Foundation. This is evident, by comparing the Tenth Verse with these that follow till the Fifteenth. The Proposition laid down, is, That Teachers ought to be very Cautious what Doctrines they published unto the People, and see that they were, in all Things, suitable to the Foundation which he had laid: For all Doctrines delivered that were sound, and would abide
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Trial, were built on the Foundation Christ, or the Doctrines revealed concerning him. Now, sure it would be a very strange Inference to conclude from these Premises, or subsume from this Proposition, that a Visible Church, as such, was built on Christ. These who are received into the Visible Church, it is either with a View to their being advanced further in Christ, or in order to their being built on him, in a Way of external Means; but not as if their being external Members, as such, built them on this glorious Foundation. Besides, this has no Foundation in the Text. Nor will what the Apostle says, *Ver. 16, 17.* alter the Case, seeing his Scope therein is, to dehort the *Corinthians* from acting a Part which might prove fatal to the Church, by their idle and vain Doctrines, which were not founded on Christ, or the Truth, as it is in him; or falling into Schismatical Practices, by being the Admirers and Followers of this or the other Teacher that was among them, and esteeming themselves on being called by his Name. This is so manifest, that it is the very Foundation the Apostle lays down, in the Entry of his Discourse, in the 4 Verse. And so these Words, *The Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are, &c.* are not a Reason why he, who teaches false Doctrines, defiles and corrupts the Temple, which supposeth, that the Visible Church is Holy, and possessed of the Divine Spirit; but a Reason why such as defile the Church, will, unquestionably, be brought under a severe Punishment, from him whose Temple it is, and the Author of all its Doctrines. This was what a Holy and Pure God would not bear with, or suffer to be done without Punishment. This natural View of the Words quite spoils the Argument that is forced from them, contrary to the Apostle's

postle's Scope. Some have imagined, that the Words made Use of by the Apostle, *The Temple of God is Holy*, are Expressions borrowed from the Typical Church of *Jerusalem*, which was a Type of the Visible Church under the *New Testament*, but without any solid Proof, seeing it only prefigure the Invisible Church as such, and those who were to be Members of the Mystical Body of Christ. And indeed the Denomination was only applicable to such in the Church of *Corinth*, and none else; for it could never be said of every individual Visible Member of that Professing Body, or of all these together collectively. For what is more manifest, than that there were Members in that Visible Church, who were grossly Profane? Some were Schismatics; some denied the Resurrection; some vilified the Doctrine of the Holy Apostle: In a Word, some were Contentious; some Drunkards; some Fornicators, and the like; to whom this Denomination could not belong. Therefore it must be considered, that the Visible Church is denominate from the better Part, and sometimes from the Worse; and so these Predications can only be meant of such to whom they truly belong, and not of the whole Body. Thus, the Visible Church, in which there are both good and bad, *Tares* and *Wheat*, is called the *Kingdom of Heaven*, and by the Name of *Saints* and *Faithful*, &c. which can only be understood of the more valuable and better Part; but by no Means, in Truth, of the whole Body collectively, and every Member thereof in particular. At other Times, she is represented a stiff-necked, a rebellious House, Children that are Corrupters; which can as little be understood of the collective Body, and every individual Member thereof, as if there was not one that sought God, and was wise.

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And thus, when the Church of *Corinth* is said to be the *Temple of the Living God*, and that he dwelleth in her, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. it must unquestionably be understood in such a Sense, as the Predication could be true, with respect unto the whole Body collectively, and every Member thereof in particular; which evidently makes it appear, that the Predication is only to be understood of the Invisible Church, or Mystical Body of the Redeemer. And so, tho' the Apostle indites his Epistle to the Visible Church of *Corinth*; yet, as it was not only to these, but unto *all that were sanctified in Christ Jesus*, &c. so it would never be a good Consequence, that every Thing in that Epistle, was only said unto that Church, or unto her as Visible. The contrary of this is manifest from many Things in the Epistle, where there is a Difference put between the Godly and the Vile; those who are living Stones in Christ's Building, and such as are not. These Things, in short, are sufficient to let us see, that all the high Titles and Encomiums past on any Church, are never able to denominate every one therein to be true Believers, or lay a sufficient Foundation for a positive Ground of Charity, that they were all Saints, and Faithful in Christ.

Secondly. It is further objected by some Persons, That the Church is such a Body, as we must have Charity for every one therein, that they are the *Flock of Christ*, which he hath purchased with his own Blood, Acts 20. 28. And that he might sanctify and cleanse it, Eph. 5. 25, 26. But to this it is answered, 1. That the Church purchased with Christ's Blood, the True God, is, by no Means, to be understood of the Church as Visible. Nor will the Words, *in the Judgment of Charity*, be of any Consideration, seeing the Text affords no Foundation

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for them: And therefore it can only be meant of those who are truly Redeemed, and bought with the Price of the Blood of God; which evidently makes the Church there spoken of, to be the Invisible Body of Christ. This, so far as I can learn, is the Judgment of all Orthodox Divines, when they write against the *Remonstrants*, or such as hold Universal Redemption, who indeed hold the Text to be meant of the Visible Church. For tho' it be granted, that the Church spoken of in the Context, was Visible, yet the Thing to be proven is, That the Church spoken of, and said to be purchased with the Blood of Christ, was the Visible Church, as such, or under that precise Notion. It is granted, that the Elect and Invisible Church may be considered as Visible; the Members thereof are such as are perceived by our Senses: But this will never conclude, That when the Church is said to be purchased with the Blood of Christ, it was the Visible Church, as such, or under this particular Consideration. This still remains to be made good; and no Conclusion that can be lawfully drawn from any Premises in the Text or Context, will ever make it evident. I shall only add, that while *Bellarmino* is labouring, from this Text, to prove, That the Visible Church is to be understood, the Learned * *Whitaker*, whom I have just now before me, saith, That particular Churches professing the Christian Religion, are denominate a Church Synecdochically, on Account of the Saints and Elect that are in them; and because the Pastors cannot discern the Elect from the Reprobate; therefore they are to feed the whole Company, and leave the whole Matter to the Judgment of God. Thus it is manifest, that that Learned Author understood

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derstood this Flock which the Pastors were required to feed, not as if the Whole of them were truly Redeemed, but only a Part ; and such Kind of Figures are very frequent in Scripture. The Efficacy of Teaching being still in the Hand of God himself, it is sufficient that his Pastors faithfully instruct those committed to their Charge in a Moral Way, and leave the Separation of the Sheep from the Goats to the Infinite Power and Eye of the Great Head of the Church.

Secondly. It must be considered, that when the Apostle says, *Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it ; that he might sanctify and cleanse it*, Eph. 5. 25, 26. it is not to be understood of the Church as Visible. It is indeed true, that *Bellarmino* makes Use of this Text as expressive of the Visible Church, or of that of which Christ was the Head ; but the forenamed **Whitaker*, with great Clearness, makes it appear, the Church of the Elect was only meant. I cannot help thinking, that every Orthodox Writer will own, That tho' Christ may be said to be the Head of the Visible Church, as he has a Moral Influence on all the Professing Body, by Virtue of his Commands and external Revelation, which has a binding Force on every Man's Conscience ; yet he is only the Head of real Influences, efficacious Power and Grace, to those who are Members of his Mystical Body, or the Invisible Church, as such ; which is the Case in the Text before us.

Thirdly. Let me add, That every one who unprejudicedly considers what the Apostle says, in the 29 & 30 Verses of the 20 Chapter of the *Acts*, will have little Ground to believe, that all and every one of the Church of *Ephesus* were purchased with Christ's

* *Uti supra.* Qu. 1. C. 9.

Christ's Blood, or were such, as One, from positive Grounds, could look upon them to be among the Number of these. Had the Apostle positive Grounds of Charity for all and every one of them, when he saith, *I know this, that after my Departure, grievous Wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the Flock: Also of your own selves shall Men arise, speaking perverse Things, &c.*? Now, whether we understand these of the Rulers of that Church, or of private Members, it does not alter the Case; for still the former were Christians, and, as such, had a Right to the External Privileges of the Gospel Covenant. Now, will any say, That the Apostle had positive Grounds of Charity, That all the Members of that Visible Church were Redeemed Ones, and the Purchase of Christ's Blood? After all, I must say, that the most of the Arguments I could ever see adduced by those of the Congregational Way, still turn on this Point, *namely*, the Confounding the Visible Church, as such, with the Invisible Church, as such; and the due adverting to this, will still discover the Fallacy of their Arguments.

Thirdly. Again, it is objected, That we are called to withdraw from such as *have the Form of Godliness, but deny the Power thereof*, 2 Tim. 3. 5. This is certainly true; but will it follow from thence, That none are to be received in as Members of the Visible Church, but such as can give positive Evidences of their Conversion and Regeneration? The Text is nowise sufficient to prove such a Consequence: For the Apostle lets us see in very ample Terms, who these are, that are said to have a Form of Godliness. These are such as be *Lovers of their own selves, Proud, Blasphemers, &c.* In a Word, by these, we are to understand subtle Hereticks,

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who deceived the Simple, laden with Sins, and led away with their Lusts. Such are justly to be withdrawn from; and joining with them might produce fatal Consequences to a Church. But will this, in any good Sense, say, That these who were not gross Livers, scandalous in such a Degree, nor seducing Hereticks, but sober, and willing to submit themselves to the Rules of the Gospel, and yet cannot give any Evidences of Grace, are to be withdrawn from, and rejected as Members of the Visible Church. This, I perswade my self, will not be a Consequence, from these Premises, that will be allowed by any good Logick.

Besides, the Apostle is there, by the Spirit of Prophecy, foretelling *Timothy* what should happen in the Church of Christ, after his Decease, and what should be the State of the Christian Church. And the Judicious *Calvin* is so far from making any such Improvement of them, as some do, that he has this remarkable Observation from them, *namely, That the Persons here noted for these bairinous Vices, are not Heathens, or Professed Enemies to Christianity, but such as would be accounted Members of the Church of Christ. It is the Lot of the Church of Christ, in every Age, to carry such Members in her Bosom, which yet she cannot but abhor: And therefore, if, in our Times, we find any such Persons mixed in our Communion, whose Vices we abominate, though we may sigh and groan under the Burden, yet we must patiently bear it, and acknowledge that this is the Fate of the Christian Church.* He further observes, *That the Vices here noted, in the Persons described by the Apostle, are, for the most Part, seculking and latent Vices, such as do not easily fall under the vulgar Observation; and yet generally accompany a feigned Sanctity. Is there any Thing in all this, that favours such a Construction*
of

of the Place, as will make it have a Relation to the Admission of Members into the Church.

Again, the Caution the Apostle gives unto *Timothy*, is, *From such turn away*, that is, Shun and avoid them. Now, from the Verses immediately following, it appears, That the Apostle had a special Eye to Schismatical and False Teachers, who, by a specious *Form of Godliness*, endeavour to seduce Persons from their lawful Pastors, and carry them off from the Communion of the Church, into private Assemblies, and House-Meetings. This is manifest from the 6 & 7 Verses. And it is remarkable, that the greatest Part of their Conquests were to be *filly Women*, who, by the Form and Appearance of their Godliness, and the fair Shew they made of more than ordinary Sanctity, they impos'd on them, as being the weaker Sex, and generally of less Judgment, Reason and Understanding. Thus, I leave it to the Consideration of the Judicious, how far the Apostle's Scope and Words favour the Cause for which they are adduced.

Fourthly. It is further objected, That the Church of *Jerusalem* was so strict in the Admission of Members, that they would not receive *Paul* into Communion with them, till he was testified of by *Bar-nabas*, Acts 9. 26, 27. But it must be considered, how this Instance comes to prove that for which it is adduced; for the Argument goes on the Supposition, That the Matter between *Paul* and the *Disciples*, at *Jerusalem*, was about his being received as a Stated Member of that Church. But where is that to be learned? The Text has not one Word concerning this. It is said, He *essay'd to join himself to the Disciples*; but what is the Amount of that? It is nothing more, but that he essay'd to have Fa-

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miliarity with them ; and in this Sense the Original Word κολλαῖται is used, *Acts* 10. 28. *You know it is unlawful for a Man that is a Jew, to keep Company, or come unto one of another Nation.* Thus, we see where the Strength of the Argument lyes, which is too weak to blind the Thinking.

Again, will any Man in Sincerity say, That the Fear which the Disciples are said to have had of *Paul*, and on Account of which they did not believe him to be a Disciple, was from Conscience and Tenderneſs in the Matter of making up the Constitution of that Viſible Church. Is there any Thing more manifeſt from the Text and Context, than, that as *Paul* had been, before, a violent Perſecutor of the Chriſtian Faith, they were ſtill under Jealouſies, he was the ſame Man, and that his ſeeking to be familiar with them, was on Deſign to have the greater Advantage againſt them. Their Fear was no other than that of *Ananias*; *Lord, I have heard by many of this Man, how much Evil he hath done to thy Saints at Jeruſalem: And here he hath Authority from the Chief Priests, to bind all that call on thy Name.* I cannot help thinking, That none who allow themſelves to caſt their Eyes back to the 13 & 14 Verſes of the ſame Chapter, will ever dream of ſuch a Fear as ſome pretend unto.

Beſides, I would gladly know of thoſe who hold, That there is no Viſible Church, but only what is Congregational, whether *Paul* had been a Viſible Member of any other Church, before this Time, and where it was? And, if he was a Member elſewhere, whether did that ceaſe, when he was deſiring to be admitted at *Jeruſalem*? In a Word, he either laid down his Memberſhip when he again returned from *Jeruſalem*, or not? If he laid it down, then whether was it neceſſary for him to be admit-

admitted anew in every Church in which he came? If he continued a standing Member of that Church, whether did that intitle him to join in Communion with other Churches where he had Occasion to be? Such strained Arguments carry along with them a Train of Absurdities.

After all, I cannot help thinking, that one main and leading Fallacy of those that espouse such Principles, is, That all the Churches we read of in Scripture, were only Congregational; and so, as there was no proper Church Power above them, they had absolute independent Authority to receive and admit Members at Pleasure, and were accountable to none for their Administrations. As to the Antecedent, I shall have Occasion afterwards to speak to it at some Length, and shall here only speak a Word as to the Consequence, which proceeds on this Footing, That because, when a particular Church planted by the Apostles, was but one single Congregation, it had all Power within itself; therefore, when it increased to more Congregations than One, or so as that all these converted to Christianity in that City, could not assemble together in one Place, it must still continue to be independent as to its Power, or each of them independent one of another. In the first Case, if a Church in a City was only Congregational, there was a Necessity that it should have Power within itself; but when it came to multiply into many such Assemblies, it was not equally necessary, that it should have this independent Power or Government in its own Hands, as when it was single by itself. To conceive a Part of a Body independent on the Whole, is something very awkward and strange. Besides, *Christ the Great Head of the Church*, in the Encouragement he has given to the

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Rulers of his House in their Assemblies, makes no Restriction, so as that these he has promised to be present with, should still be of one Congregation, but it runs to all indefinitely that *meet in his Name* *.

I shall only add, That according to the Principles of the *Independents*, the Pastor of a Church can do no Pastoral Office out of the Congregation of which he is a Pastor ; but then I would know, what Kind of a Church that of *Jerusalem* was, when she had all the Apostles in her ? Either they were fixed Members in her, or not ? If they were, then they could not, according to this Principle, preach any where else but in their own Congregation, as Pastors ; by which their universal Commission and Pastorship was destroyed. If they were not, then the Pastorship of a particular Organical Church, in the Sense pled for, is destroyed. For here we find a Church, the First in the Christian World, that had no such Pastors. And indeed, tho' there is a vast Odds between that Society which is purely Civil, and by free and mutual Consent, and that which is Sacred, and ariseth from an Antecedent binding Authority to give their Consent to associate together ; yet I must freely own, that one may with equal Reason plead, That because all Civil Authority was, at first, in particular Families, therefore it behov'd always to continue in this State ; as, that because in the first Beginnings of Christianity in any City, there was but one single Congregation, and all Church Power was in it ; therefore it must still continue to be so in all after Times. And thus National Government in the State is as much without a Right from these Facts, as National Assemblies in the Church.

This

* *Matth.* 18. 20.

This Treatise was fully completed, before I came to consider the Arguments of our late Author on this Head. And now when I have taken a View of them, I cannot help thinking, but the Substance of what is said by him is answered. I can perceive nothing in them that is new, or what the Learned Mr. *Wood* has not answered, excepting his Notion on *Acts* 5. 12, 13, 14. which is fully considered in another Place. Besides, there is, before this Time, a Performance on National Churches published; which has happily prevented me on this Head, as it might have done in others, had it come out before I had cast this Treatise into Form and Method, and almost finished it on the Point of *Independency*.

S E C T. IV.

The Power of Government is given by Christ to Church Officers, and not to a Congregation of Believers; nor is it derived from the Body of the People to their Rulers. The Truth hereof confirmed by Five Considerations.

THE next Head we maintain, is, That the Power of Rule and Government, is delivered by Christ to such as are Ministers of Word and Sacraments; and to none but such as are appointed by him to bear an Office in the Church. 'Tis pretended by some, who are Antipodes to Episcopacy, that the Power commonly called that of the Keys, is committed to the Church in General, or every Member of that Body; so that they are impowered to Exercise it immediately by themselves, and that the Rulers of the Church act by a Power de-

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rived from them, and are their Delegates and Representatives. It will be readily granted by the Presbyterians, and some Episcopalians, That the Laicks have a Power of making Choice of, and nominating One to be their Minister, or to give their Assent or Dissent to One proposed to them, *Acts* 6. 3, 5, 6.* And that this remain'd with the Church, till the Tyranny and Usurpation of Antichrist took Place. Nor is it pleaded, That the Power of Church Rulers is absolute, as that of the Apostles was; but limited, and such as is to be regulated by Revelation, and used for the truest Interests of Christ's Church. Besides, it will not be questioned, but in a disturbed State of the Church, and in beginning and carrying on a Reformation, there may be many Things performed by Laicks, which did not belong to them, but in these extraordinary Circumstances. In some Cases, Persons must give Way to Necessity, and are obliged to do that which they would not, nay, were not lawful for them, if orderly and regular Methods could have been attain'd to. When a Command about the Means, that are ordinarily necessary to an End absolutely commanded, cannot be observed, it must not hinder an Observance, or Warrant the Neglect of the greater Command. But there can be no Argument drawn from an Extraordinary Case to an Ordinary. The Question then is, Whether the Power of the Keys was lodged by a Deed of Gift from Christ, in the Hands of the Body of the People, as an Original Right belonging to them, and of which they were the Immediate Subjects? This is what we look upon to be cross to the Revelation of Christ, and attended with manifold absurd Consequences. For,

First.

* See 1 Tim. 3. Titus 1. 6. and Dr. Hammond's Note on *Acts* 6.

First. If the Power of Jurisdiction and Government did Originally belong unto the Body of the People, and the Office-bearers of the Church receiv'd this from them; then certainly it must be given them in Commission by Christ, and what he laid upon the People in the Epistles indited to the Churches. This Consequence must be undeniable, unless Christ's Regal Power be refused, or that the Ministerial Powers are a Deed of Gift from him. But it is observable, That tho' the Epistles indited to the Churches are considerably more in Number, than those to particular Persons in Office; yet, in all these, after the strictest Search, we shall not meet with any Commission, by which they were impowered, either to make Investiture of the Ministerial Powers to any Person; judge of his Qualifications in order thereto; or exercise the Keys in the Matters of Discipline, till we come to these indited to *Timothy* and *Titus*. Both of them were Persons in Office, and what relates to the Power of the Keys, is fully represented to, and laid upon them to exercise for the Good of the Church, which serves to represent the Original Right of Church-officers in all Ages, and what they have a Title unto by Divine Appointment and Institution. It is not conceivable, but, that if it had been the Will of Heaven, that the Body of the People should have had a Right to exercise the Keys in the Matters of Discipline, it would appear, in the many Epistles indited to them; whereas, nothing of this doth appear to the Satisfaction of any impartial Considerer. One might think, the bare Consideration of this was sufficient to expose the Vanity and Weakness of this Popular Conceit.

Secondly. The Power of the Keys is so far from being

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being committed to the Body of the People, by the Adorable Head of the Church, that it was immediately given unto his Apostles; and consequently, to their Successors, or such as they made the Investiture of their ordinary Powers unto. This is manifest from *John* 20. 21, 22, 23. *Matth.* 16. 19. & 18. 17, 18.

Besides, it is to be considered, That when our Lord gave that ample Commission to his Apostles, *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. which either expressly or virtually contains all the Ministerial Powers, that were to be continued to the End of the World; it appears the Body of the People were not so much as present when it was delivered. For, immediately before this Commission was given forth, it is observable the Apostles went away unto *Galilee, unto the Mountain where Jesus had appointed them*, *Matth.* 28. 16. and that this was a Place Christ had formerly designed for meeting with his Apostles, and there imparting his Mind unto them concerning the Kingdom of Heaven, appears from his saying, *Matth.* 26. 32. *But after I am risen again, I will go before you unto Galilee.* Now, when it is considered, that after his Resurrection, he was so intent and careful in putting them in Mind of this designed Interview, *Matth.* 28. 7, 10. *Mark* 16. 7. and that upon the Eleven's going to that Place, according to Appointment, they had their Commission delivered unto them, *Matth.* 28. 18, 19, 20. Who can imagine, that the Body of the People was concerned therein, or had the Ministerial Powers committed to them, as their immediate Subject? 'Tis observable, that our Lord was instant to have his Apostles, and these only present, when this Commission was tendered; and besides *teaching and baptizing all Nations,*

Nations, they were required to teach them to observe all Things whatsoever he had commanded them; and in so doing, he was to countenance, assist and support his Office-bearers to the End of the World. By this it is evident, that these Powers were not only given immediately to the Eleven, and they commanded to teach the People to observe all Things, during their own Lives, but it being promised, that the Master's Countenance and Assistance should be with them to the End of the World, proves undeniably the Commission had a Reference to all those that should succeed them in their ordinary Powers, and exercise the same over the Church, till she should be brought unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ. There were some Promises made unto the Apostles, that had a particular Relation to their Extraordinary Character, and to be supporting to them in fulfilling these Things that were incumbent on them, as such, and above what is given in Commission to Ordinary Ministers, or commanded to private Christians, *Matth. 10. 1. Acts 1. 8. Mark 13. 11.* Some were given to them as private Christians, when the Duties required were of that Nature which equally concern'd every Believer in Christ, *Matth. 24. 42. & 6. 9, 10, 14. Mark 13. 37.* and some were made unto them as *Stewards of the Mysteries of God*, when the Things laid upon them were neither of an Extraordinary Nature, nor such as belonged unto every particular Christian, but unto those who were concerned in the Work of the Ministry, and doing of these Things which were to be continued in the Church, for her *Perfecting and Building up*. Now, of this Nature were the Things express'd in our Lord's Commission, Teaching and Baptizing, and exercising the
Power

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Power of the Keys, which was also committed unto the Apostles ; and therefore, the Promise annexed for the Encouragement of Persons employed in the dispensing of them, and exercising Jurisdiction over the Church, was not barely to the Persons of the Apostles, or their Doctrine absolutely considered ; but to such as should succeed them in Teaching and Baptizing, &c. The Promise was made to the Apostles, as Persons clothed with the Ministerial Office, and it being extended to the End of the World, cou'd not be restricted to their own Days, seeing they were not to live for ever ; nor to their Doctrine, it being made to Persons Teaching and Baptizing ; and so, to those who should come after them in the Work of the Ministry, from Time to Time, in the several Ages ensuing, till the Consummation of all Things. For, as it is made evident, Christ joined not the People with the Apostles at *Galilee*, but his Care was remarkable, that none should be there but the Eleven ; so it cannot be doubted, that the Promise is not only to the Apostles, but their Successors, it being manifest, the Expression of being with them to the End of the World, carries it beyond the Apostolical Days. Nor can it be imagined, any sensible Person will be moved with the Criticism of some, rendring *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος*, not *the End of the World*, but the End of the Age, since the Phrase is so constantly used by the same Evangelist, for the End of the World, *Matth.* 13. 39, 40, 49. & 24. 3. And tho' it may be objected, that *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος*, cannot always signify the End of the World, seeing *ἐπὶ συντέλειᾳ τῶν αἰώνων*, *Heb.* 9. 26. But now in the *End of the World*, is not so to be understood ; yet such as lay any Weight on this, must consider, that there is a Difference between

tween συντέλεια τῶν αἰώνων, and συντέλεια τῶν αἰώνων. Mr. Joseph Mede's Observe on this, is, That according to the Stile of the Scriptures, when the *Terminus* or End of Time is exprest, it is laid down in the singular Number; as in *John* 6. 39, 40, 44, 54. & 11. 24. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. But when the Continuation or longer Space of Time is pointed at, and not the utmost End or Period of Time, then the Plural Number is made Use of, as in 1 *Pet.* 1. 20. *Heb.* 1. 12. 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. *Acts* 11. 17. And this is sufficient to remove this Pretence. *

Thus then, the Power of the Keys is not from the People, seeing it was committed to the first Officers of the Church by our Lord. And indeed, considering the Apostles were the Foundation upon which the Christian Church was to be built, it is most natural to imagine, That the Foundation was first laid, before the Superstructure was rais'd; and that they were vested with all these Powers necessary to make up and perfect that Church, which was not, as yet, in Being; or properly, had not receiv'd its Form; but was afterwards to be gathered and planted by them. For, if the Apostles were vested with full Powers to plant and gather Churches, it must be admitted, that they had them not from the People, or by Confederation with them; for that supposeth a Church in Being before it was in Being, and so involves a Contradiction. And indeed, when it is manifest, that this Power was made over to the Apostles by our Blessed Lord, in a *Deed of Gift*, *Matth.* 16. 19. *John* 20. 23. it requires a very clear Proof, That ever it afterwards became the Right and Inherent Privilege of the Body of the People;

* See *Stillingfleet's* Iren. Part 2. Page 164. &c.

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People; and nothing less than the like *Deed of Gift* could entitle them to it. And if we take a View of the History of those first sent forth by Christ, and their Actings in forming Churches, it is easy to observe how they understood their Commissions. As there is not the least Intimation, that ever they acted in the People's Name, in the Matters of Ordination and Government; so they, in every Place where the People were made obedient to the Faith of the Gospel, constitute and set apart Persons to bear Office and Rule in the Church. Thus, such as were ordained by them, followed their Practice; and so we read of *the Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*, but no where of the Laying on of the Hands of the People: And it is said to *Timothy, Against an Elder receive not an Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses; them that sin, Rebuke before all, that others also may fear*: But it is no where said, that this was the Province of the People, or that such as were set apart by the Apostles to the Holy Ministry, were to act in their Name. This much might be sufficient for establishing this Head. But, *Thirdly*. All the different Offices mentioned by the Apostle, *Eph. 4. 11. Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers*, are expressly said to be the Gift of Christ unto his Church. Now, if they were the Immediate Gift of the Redeemer, for perfecting and building up his House; it must be undeniable, that all these Powers which belonged to them, in their several Stations and Characters, and particularly the Work of the Ministry, wherein all of them were concerned, were not from the Body of the People, or committed to them, as their Immediate Subject, from whence they were to flow to Pastors and Teachers. For
• Christ

Christ to give Officers immediately to his Church, for her perfecting and building up, is a Thing vastly different from his giving a Power immediately to his Church, that she might make the Investiture of the Ministerial Powers to Persons, and judge of their Qualifications for her own Edification, and being brought to the Unity of the Faith, and the Fulness of the Stature of Christ. The former is expressly asserted in Sacred Writ; but the latter, no where, in any of the Apostolical Writings; and therefore, must be Apocryphal. And, that the Power of the Keys is included in the *Work of the Ministry*, must be undeniable, unless it shall be said, it was not necessary for *Perfecting and Edifying the Body of Christ*, the Vindication of his Honour, and bringing all his Members to a perfect Stature. Nor can it possibly be alledged, that Ministers were not distinguished or differenced from the Body of the Church itself, seeing they are expressly said to be given to the Church, and are in the strongest Terms said to be rais'd above her in their Powers and Authority, 1 Cor. 12. from Ver. 4. to Ver. 28, 29. Rom. 12. 6, 7.

Fourthly. It is to be observed, That all those Names or Designations, that are ascribed to Pastors and Elders, by which God designed to express their Office and Character, do, in the strongest Terms, hold forth their Powers to be distinct from the Church or Body of the People over which they are placed. They are called Bishops, 1 Tim. 3. 2. Tit. 1. 17. Acts 20. 28. *Stewards of the Mysteries of God*, 1 Cor. 4. 1. *Ambassadors and Ministers of Reconciliation*, 2 Cor. 5. 18, 20. *Pastors and Doctors*, Eph. 4. 11, 12. *Governors or Governments*, 1 Cor. 12. 28. *Rulers*, Rom. 12. 8. 1 Thes.

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5. 12. 1 *Tim.* 5. 17---. *Elders*, *Acts* 14. 23. & 15. 2, 4. & 20. 17. *Tit.* 1. 5. 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. and *Guides* or *Leaders*, *Heb.* 13. 7, 17, 24. These Appellations, as they express the Office-bearers of the Church, and distinguish them from the *Flock*, or Body of the People; so all of them import a Power of Rule and Government; and, that the Persons denominated by them, were Authorized to judge and determine Matters or Causes relating to the House of God. And what puts this beyond Question, is, That these very Names, as they are expressed in the Original, are applied in the *Greek Version* of the *Old Testament*, to express both the Civil and Ecclesiastical Rulers of the *Jewish State*; and by other Writers, to design Civil Power and Jurisdiction of the Heathen Nations, Cities and Armies. Thus, ἐπίσκοπος, rendred *Bishop*, is made Use of, to express the Civil Power of the *Jewish Magistrates*, *Num.* 13. 14. *Judg.* 9. 25. 2 *Kings* 11. 15. 1 *Maccab.* 1. καὶ ἐποίησεν ἐπίσκοπους ἐπὶ πάντα τὸ λαόν. In like Manner, πρεσβυτερος, rendred *Elder*, is made Use of to express the Civil Rulers among the *Jews*, which were called the Elders of the Gate, *Judg.* 8. 14. *Ruth.* 4. 23. 2 *Sam.* 5. 3. 1 *Chron.* 11. 3. Again, προεστὴς and προεως, rendred *Ruler*, is made Use of by *Thucydides*, *Demosthenes*, *Herodotus*, *Plato*, &c. to express the Rulers of Kingdoms, Armies and Cities, as is to be seen in *Hen. Stephanus's Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*. Besides, the Word κυβερνησις, rendred *Governors* or *Governments*, is, by the same Author, used to express the Civil Power and Authority of Magistrates, as he shews from *Xenophon*, *Cicero*, *Plato*, and others. As for ἡγούμενος, render'd *Guide* or *Leader*, it is not only made Use of in profane Writers, but in the *Greek Version* of the *Old Testament*,

ment, and Original Greek in the New, to express the Power and Authority of Civil Judges, *Josh.* 13. 21. *Deut.* 1. 13. *Mic.* 3. 9. 2 *Chron.* 5. 1. *Ezek.* 44. 3. & 45. 7. *Dan.* 3. 2. *Acts* 7. 10. *Matth.* 2. 6. & 27. 2, &c. Besides, ποιμενε, Pastors, and the Verb ποιμαίνει to feed, are Words by which the Greek Version of the Old Testament expresseth both Ecclesiastick and Civil Judges, and Government, *Isa.* 44. 28. *Nab.* 3. 18. *Mic.* 5. 5. *Jer.* 3. 15. & 17. 16. & 6. 3. & 12. 10. & 49. 19. *Zech.* 11. 7. *Ezek.* 34. 1, 15, 16. *Psal.* 78. 71, 72. & 28. 9. 1 *Chron.* 17. 6. 2 *Sam.* 5. 2. Nay, it is made Use of, to express the sovereign Rule and Authority of God himself, *Psal.* 23. 1. *Heb.* 13. 20. *John* 10. 11. 1 *Pet.* 5. 4. *Matth.* 26. 3. *Mark* 14. 27. 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. *Matth.* 2. 6. *Psal.* 78. 52. *Jer.* 31. 10. *Ezek.* 34. 23. & 37. 24. *Zech.* 13. 17, &c. Agreeable to this Notion of the Original Word, we find *Agamemnon* is call'd by *Homer*, ποιμενα λαων, King of the People; and this is the frequent Designation he gives unto Princes, that Rule for the Good of their Subjects. Now, if these Names, by which the Holy Ghost expresseth the Office-bearers of the New Testament Church, be such as include the Power of Rule and Government, according to the received Notion of the Words, both in Sacred and prophane Writings; it is a Demonstration, that the Power of the Keys belongs unto them by Divine Appointment, and they are called to exercise them, agreeably to the Nature of the Redeemer's Kingdom, and according to the Rules he hath prescribed. This Power belonged unto the Priests and Levites under the Old Testament, or at least to none but Persons in Office, and the People had not the least Share therein; and it will be more than difficult to make it good, That this, as to them, was

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purely Typical ; and any that shall alledge it, ought to point forth the Antitype. It is indeed true, that the Eminency and lordly Dignity of the *Jewish* High Priest, above all the other *Priests* and *Levites*, in which the Episcopalians place the *Eutaxy* or handsom Order of their Constitution, was Typical, and had an Eye to the supereminent Dignity of our *Great High Priest Christ Jesus*, and is now swallowed up in him. But this will not say, but the *Officers* in the *New Testament Church*, being pointed forth by the Holy Ghost in such Names and Appellations, as are most expressive of Rule and Jurisdiction, have equally a Claim to it, and Interest in the Exercise thereof, with the Rulers of the *Old Testament Church*, who were designed by the same and like Names ; and that the former were independent on the Body of the People, as well as the latter, as to their Powers. Ministers of the Gospel are *Ambassadors of Christ*, and they act in his Name, and in his Stead, in the Exercise of Jurisdiction and Government, as well as in the dispensing Word and Sacraments. Thus the Apostle calls them *Guides* or *Leaders*, and requires the People to *obey* and *submit* to them : *For they watch for your Souls, as they that must give Account*, Heb. 13. 17. And it is observable, that the Original Word rendred *Obey* and *Submit*, denotes an Obedience in a strict Sense, and not a bare Perswasion, but such a Submission, as was without Resistance, and due unto Authority. For, the Original Word translated *Submit*, is a Military Term, and intimates such a Subjection, as is incumbent on Soldiers to the Authority of their Commanders. From the Whole, there seems nothing to be more clear, than, That the Power of Rule and Government, is lodged in the Ministers and Elders
of

of Christ's House; and they that would deprive them thereof, must fly in the Face of Divine Revelation.

Fifthly. It is to be observed, That as the Power of Rule and Government is, in the strongest Terms, ascribed to Gospel Ministers, in those Names by which the Holy Ghost designs them; so the Church, or Body of the People, are represented in sacred Writ, by such Designations, as makes it evident, they were the Objects on which this Power was to be exercised. In the Scriptures, the Church is compared to a *Flock*, John 10. *a House*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. 2 *Tim.* 2. 20. *a City*, Matth. 5. *a Body*, 1 *Cor.* 12. *an Army*, Song. 6. 13. and *a Kingdom*, Col. 1. 13. In all these Designations, Infinite Wisdom gives such a View of his Church, as makes it evident, she is not the immediate Subject of that Power of Rule and Government which he expressly declares to be involved in the Office and Character of his Ambassadors. 'Tis contrary to the Notion of a House, a Flock, Army or Kingdom to Rule; but all of these speak forth the Exercise of Government and Jurisdiction over them. And for any to maintain, That that Power was bestowed on the whole Body of the Church, as a Gift immediately from God, is without any Foundation in Holy Writ, nay, expressly contrary to it, and the Dictates of sound Reason. The Church of Christ is a *Heterogeneous*, or *Organick Body*, according to the Representation given us by the Apostle. 1 *Cor.* 12. But this would infallibly make her to be *Homogeneous*, and all her Members to be of alike Powers, and of the same Kind. Besides, if the Ministerial Powers were first committed to the Church, or Body of the People, then it must be granted, that Go-

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spel Ministers are not *Ambassadors for Christ*, nor act in *his* Name; tho' expressly asserted by the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. *but* in the Name of the Church, and for her; it being from her they receive their Legation and Powers. And so God has committed to her a Power to govern herself, and makes her to be a Body governing and governed. And from this, it may be further inferred, That the Church has a Power to preach the Word; bless and sanctify Things; to represent, seal and apply the Body and Blood of Christ, and exercise Discipline on herself: For all these are connected together by Christ, in the Commission given forth by him after his Resurrection from the Dead, *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. Compare *Matth.* 26. 26, 27, 28, 32. *John* 20. 21, 22, 23. & 21. 15, 16, 17. Thus, the Church, or Body of the People, must of Consequence be the Dispensers of the Mysteries of God. Now, according to this, what should be the Object of this Dispensation; not the Church herself; because, according to this, she is the Subject dispensing, and in which this Power is lodged; and therefore this Dispensation must be made to some Object distinct from the Church; and if so, then that Dispensation was not, at the first, designed for the Good of the Church, but those that were distinct from, and without her Verge. Nor will it be of any avail to alledge, That the Church may transfer this Dispensation, or the Powers originally in them from God, unto others for the Exercise of them; for Powers of Divine and Sacred Nature, committed to a Person or Body of People, as Members of a Church, cannot be transferred, without the Allowance and Appointment of him by whom they were at first confer'd. And besides, there is no Need to make any such Conveyance;

veyance ; for that supposeth, those to whom the Conveyance is made, were not Originally possessed of them, contrary to what is alledged, *namely*, That those Powers are Originally in all the Members of the Church. He that is Originally vested with a Power from God, and is the proper Subject thereof, cannot, without a Contradiction, be said to have these Powers transferred to him from others, on whom God had bestowed the same Powers. And if it shall be granted, that this Power was not committed to the Church by God ; then it must be equally allowed, that the Pastors and Governors did not receive it from the Church, or derive it from the Body of the People.

In a Word, if the Power of the Keys was committed to the Body of the People ; either they have it equally with the Pastors, or not. If they have it but equally with the Pastors ; then the Pastors do not receive it from the People, seeing they are as immediately possessed of it as the People are. But, if the Power of the Keys be not equally committed to the Pastors and the People ; then I would know, whether it be more committed to the People, or the Pastors ? If it be more committed to the People than the Pastors, then the Names and Characters ascribed to them, and by which their Power and eminent Rule over the Church is exprest, are not rightly ascribed to them by the Holy Ghost. The Apostle expressly says, *Hebr. 13. 17. Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves ; for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give an Account.* Now, notwithstanding this supereminent Authority they have over the People, exprest by the Spirit of God, and the peremptory Command given to the People to subject thereunto, in as much as Pastors were to be ac-

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countable to God, how they discharged the Trust he had lodged in them; yet the People have a supereminent Power and Authority over the Ministers, which has a very strong Appearance of a Contradiction. Besides, how is this consistent with the same Apostle's giving the Power of Government, and Ordination of Presbyters, to *Timothy* and *Titus*, without the smallest Hint of the Peoples Concern therein? And what is more, if the greater Power of the Keys is in the Body of the People, how comes it, that the Spirit of God imputes all to the *Angels* of the *Asian* Churches, whatever was amiss or Praise-worthy among them? If the greater Power was in the People, then the Approbation or Reprehension, according to the Discharge or Neglect of its Exercise, was to be ascrib'd unto them. And indeed, if they had so much as an Equality of Power, they justly deserv'd to have had their Share with the Angels, of Commendation or Reproof; yet all is charged on the Angels, *Rev.* 2. 3, 6. But to return, if the greater Power was in the Ministers, then they had it not from the People, but immediately from Christ, its Author, who bestow'd it on whom he had a Mind. Nor will the Cause be better'd, by alledging, That the Ministerial Powers are confer'd by the Suffrage of the People, which is signified by the *χειροτονια* or Lifting up of the Hands; because it only denotes their Assent, and is a Sign of their Subjection to this or the other Person, and the Acknowledgment of him, as a Man duly and regularly set apart to be a Dispenser of the Sacred Mysteries, by Christ, in the appointed Method, or with the Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, *Acts* 13. 1, 2, 3. *1 Tim.* 4. 14. & 5. 22. *2 Tim.* 1. 6. These are Things vastly differing, for a Person to receive, or have the Invest-

Investiture of the Ministerial Powers made over to him, by the Act or Suffrage of the People; and the People to testify their Assent, and signify their Acknowledgment of these Powers to be in him, and that they thereby promise Subjection and becoming Reverence. The first is what the Minister has by Virtue of his Ordination, and the Nature of the Office into which he is sent forth by Divine Appointment; the latter is indeed from the People. So then, from the whole of what has been said, there is not the least Evidence, that the Power of making or ordaining Ministers, is committed to the People, or that they are the immediate Subject of the Keys. This is all that is argued against; there being no Design to dispute their Liberty of making Choice of them. I'm absolutely against Ministers lording it over God's Heritage, and their imposing a particular Minister upon a professing People, without their Approbation, when they are willing to call: The extraordinary Gift of discerning Spirits having ceased with the Apostles, and had not a Being in the Church, since the Scripture Canon was completed: And therefore, as the People, in the Ages which came next after, had this Privilege, I see no Reason wherefore they should now be deprived of it. All that was design'd on this Head, was, to make it appear, That the Power of the Keys, no less than that of dispensing Word and Sacraments, was committed to the Ministers and Governors of the Church, and not unto the Body of the People.

S E C T. V.

A single Church, such as that of Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, had in it several Congregations meeting for Publick Worship, whose Rulers met in one Presbytery for Discipline and Government. The first Branch of this Proposition, viz. That several Congregations for Publick Worship were in one Church, is confirmed, particularly from the Church of Jerusalem, in four Considerations.

THAT which falls next under Consideration, is, That a single Church, according to the Stile of the *New Testament*, was not confin'd to one single Congregation, or Meeting of People, for performing Publick Worship. The opposite of this is what we maintain, *namely*, That in those famous Churches planted by the Apostles, in several of the principal Cities in the Bounds of the *Roman Empire*, there were a Plurality of Christian Congregations, which made up one Ecclesiastical Society, which, in Scripture Phrase, is called, a Presbytery. Thus we read of the Church of *Jerusalem*, Acts 8. 1. the Church of *Antioch*, Acts 13. 1. the Church of *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 1. 1. 2 Cor. 1. 1. the Church of *Thessalonica*, 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 1. the Church that is at *Babylon*, 1 Pet. 5. 13. the Church of *Laodicea*; and, in a Word, all the rest of the Seven Churches of *Asia*, when spoken of separately, are exprest in the singular Number, *Rev.* 2. 1, --- 18. & 3. 1, 7, 14. Nor can I find any where in the *New Testament*, that the Body of Christians in any City, however numerous they were, are considered as distinct Societies, or receive the Apellation of the *Churches of that City*, in the plural Number. It

It is indeed own'd, That in the first Beginnings of Christianity in any Place, there might be such a small Body of People professing Christianity, as made up one single Congregation; and even this was a true Church, vested with the Power of the Keys, and had its Ecclesiastical Government. Nor is it refus'd, but that such a small Church still continued in one Congregation, while their Number did not increase to make up more: Distinct Assemblies are not to be multiplied but on reasonable Grounds. Again, it is yielded, that a single Church was not made up of Congregations considerably remote one from another, so as their Rulers and Governors could not possibly maintain frequent Meetings for the Exercise of Discipline. And so, when the Christians of a whole Country are mentioned, they are represented as being distinct Societies. Thus, we read of the Churches of *Galatia*, Gal. 1. 1, 2. the Churches of *Samaria* and *Galilee*, 1 *Thes.* 2. 14. *Acts* 9. 31. the Churches of *Syria* and *Cilicia*, *Acts* 9. 41. the Churches of *Macedonia*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 1. the Churches of *Asia*, *Rev.* 1. 11. 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. These Things being premised, what remains to be established, is, That the *Church*, in the singular Number, according to the Style of the *New Testament*, is not to be understood of one single Congregation, but of several distinct Assemblies meeting together for publick Worship, all joined into one Ecclesiastick Society, or under the immediate Government of their several Church-officers, assembled in a Class or Presbytery. This Class or Presbytery, I understand in the same View as it is describ'd in our Directory, that is, *Consisting of Ministers of the Word, and such other publick Officers as are agreeable to, and warranted by the Word of God, to be Church Governors, to join with*
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the Ministers in the Government of the Church. Now, for the Confirmation of the first Branch of this Head, let it be considered,

First. The Apostles were immediately sent forth by Christ ; and in what they wrote and delivered unto the Churches, they were supported by his own Authority ; they taught nothing to the People, but what they were infallibly directed unto by his Spirit ; and their Institutions, which carried in them a perpetual Reason of Equity, carried in them the Binding Force of a Law, and were equally obligatory with the Institutions of their Lord. To them was given the Power of planting Churches, making up a complete Pattern, and the essential Maxims of Ecclesiastick Government, to be observed in all Ages ; and if their Example herein shall be abandoned by the Church of Christ, she must wander in endless Uncertainties, and every one will do what seems good in his own Eyes, and thereby produce her Destruction, and inextricable Confusion, to the Contempt of the Authority of the King of Saints, exactly observed by the Apostles. Besides, they were endued with a peculiar Energy in Preaching, and their Ministry was attended with amazing Success, by which vast multitudes were made obedient to the Gospel Faith ; and so, in these remarkable Cities where famous Churches were planted, there was a competent Number to make up such an Ecclesiastical Body as was sufficient to give us a clear View of an Example, and what was to be the Rule and Measure of Church Government in all future Ages. And when we are to take a View of the Apostolical Churches, designed from any remarkable City where the Body of Christians in each of these are invariably denominate Church in the singular Number,

Number, as it evidently points forth the Nature and Genius of their Government; so it will appear they were made up of several distinct or separate Congregations for publick Worship.

Here we shall only take a Review of the Mother Church at *Jerusalem*, and leave the rest to be considered afterwards, in their proper Place. This Church had, unquestionably, several distinct Congregations in her, as will appear, in the *first* Place, from the vast Multitude of Converts that were soon gathered by the Ministry of the Apostles. For, in her first Beginnings, before our Lord's Ascension, the Apostle declares he was seen of above five hundred Brethren at once, *1 Cor. 15. 6.* At *Peter's* first Sermon, preached immediately after the Down-pouring of the Holy Ghost, there were added to the Church, about *Three thousand Souls*, *Acts 2. 41.* And *Ver. 47.* it is said, that *the Lord added to the Church daily, such as should be saved.* After this it is said, that *many of them who heard the Word, believed; and the Number of the Men was about Five thousand*, *Acts 4. 4.* To these we find there were Believers more added to the Lord, *Multitudes both of Men and Women*, *Acts 5. 14.* Again, before the Election of the Deacons, it is said, that *the Number of the Disciples was multiplied*; and thereafter, *the Number of the Disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great Company of the Priests were obedient to the Faith*, *Acts 6. 1, 7.* Now, all these Passages being compared together, is it to be imagined, that the Church of *Jerusalem* was but one single Congregation? This, I cannot help thinking, is an unquestionable Discovery, there was a plurality of Congregations, or distinct Assemblies of Christians for publick Worship, in the first Mother

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ther Church, before the Dispersion by the Persecution that afterwards arose.

Again, after that Persecution was over, we find there were great Additions made to the Church of *Jerusalem*; for it is said, *they had Rest, and were multiplied*, Acts 9. 31. And after *Peter's* miraculous Deliverance from Prison, *But the Word of God grew and multiplied*, Acts 12. 24. And to shut up all, when *Paul* went up to *Jerusalem*, he is informed by *James* and the *Elders*, Acts 21. 20. *But thou seest, Brother, how many Thousands of Jews there are which believe*. In the Original, it is *Myriads*, that is, how many Ten thousands *Jews* believe; And so, according to the Genius of the *Greek* Language, the Word being in the plural Number, this Computation must, at least, be Thirty or Forty thousand. Certain it is, the Original Word imports an exceeding great Number, well nigh innumerable; and so the Word is translated, *Luke* 12. 1. & *Heb.* 12. 22. He had Need of a very strong Faith, that can allow himself to believe, that many *Myriads* or Ten thousands, were but one single Congregation, and under the Instruction of one Pastor at a Time. And indeed it is to be observed, that notwithstanding of the innumerable Company of Christians, yet the Church of *Jerusalem* is nowhere in the *New Testament* designed *Churches*, but *the Church* in the singular Number. And it will be of no Weight to alledge, that during the Apostle's Days, distinct Congregations were not fixed in *Jerusalem*; for, as it is impossible for any *Independent* to make this good; so, whether they were, or were not, does not in the least affect our Cause, or in any Part weaken this Argument.

Nor is it of any Weight what is objected by some, *namely*, That all this Multitude mentioned before the

the Persecution that arose upon *Stephen's* Death, were not Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, but had their Residence at *Mesopotamia*, *Cappadocia*, *Pontus*, *Asia*, &c. For it is expressly said, *Acts* 2. 5. before the different Nations and Provinces are mentioned, that *there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout Men, out of every Nation under Heaven.* And in the 14th Verse, the Apostle *Peter* introduceth himself unto the Multitude, out of which the Three thousand were converted, *Ye Men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my Words.* So, by comparing these two Texts, tho' these devout Men might have once resided at these different Places mentioned; yet it seems plain from the Series of the History, they were now Inhabitants at *Jerusalem*: And this is the rather to be thought, because the dispersed *Jews* were now full in the Expectation of the Coming of the Messiah, *Luke* 19. 11. & 2. 26, 38. & 3. 15. *John* 1. 20, 21. Besides, the Original Word κατοικῶντες, render'd *Dwelling*, is, for the most Part, taken for some Time's constant Residence in a Place, and no where, so far as I can learn in the *New Testament*, it denotes the Abiding in a City for a few Nights or Days, which would have been the Case, if those spoken of had only come up to the Feast of *Pentecost*. Thus, the same Original Word is made Use of, *Acts* 9. 32. And *Peter* came down to the Saints, which *dwelt at Lydda*. And when *Abraham* came out of the Land of the *Chaldeans*, 'tis said *he dwelt in Charan*, κατοικῶν ἐν χαρραν, *Acts* 7. 4. And *Joseph*, when he was warned to come out of *Egypt*, he is said to dwell in a City called *Nazareth*, κατοικῶν ἐν πόλει, in which, according to *Eusebius* and *Epiphanius*, he remained four Years.

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In a Word, it is made Use of to point forth our Lord's constant Inhabitation in the Hearts of Believers, *Eph. 3. 17. John 6. 37. & 14. 23.* Indeed, if the Original Word had been *παροικέω*, it would have said very much to have determin'd, That the vast Multitude then at *Jerusalem*, were only occasionally in that Place; for its true Meaning, according to the Judicious Glossary * *Suicer*, is, *advena*, or, *peregrinus sum*, *I am a Stranger or Foreigner in any Place.* In this Sense, the Word is used, *Luke 24. 18. Eph. 2. 19.* But then, the same Author puts *κατοικέω* in a direct Opposition to the former, and says, That according to the ancient Glosses, it signifies to *dwell*, or *have an Habitation in a Place*: for which he adduceth several Authorities. This I look upon, as sufficient to justify our Assertion. And tho' it be said in the 10th Verse, that not only *Jews*, but *Profelytes*, were of that Multitude, to whom *Peter preached*, and therefore all of them were not Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, or its Neighbourhood; yet it must be considered, the *Jews* were, most properly, such as inhabited the Country of *Judea*; but, in our Saviour's Time (a), all were called *Jews*, who observ'd the Law of *Moses* and all the Prophets, whether they were *Hellenists*, *Profelytes*, or *Jews* in a strict and proper Sense. Now, the *Profelytes* of the Covenant were accounted as really *Jews*, as those who were truly so by Birth, by Reason of their being bound to the same Observances with them; and to them it was permitted to dwell in the City of *Jerusalem*; and they were bound up from eating and drinking, or having

* *Suicer* in Vocab. *παροικέω* and *παροικία* *παροικέω* significat *Advena*, *Peregrinus sum*, & opponitur τῷ *κατοικέω*, quo i apud veteres Glossas, *Habito*, *Incolo*. (a) See *Lewis Origin. Hebr.* V. 11. Pag. 32, 33, 34.

ving any Manner of Dealing with the *Gentiles*, lest they became unclean, as well as the *Jews* strictly so called. Thus, it is easy to observe, that the Sacred Historian, at first, comprehends both under the Name of *Jews*, and then, afterwards, discovers who those were he designed by that Name. And it is worth noticing, That the Apostle *Peter*, when he comes to address himself to that numerous Audience, *Acts* 2. 22, 23, 36. his Introduction runs, *Ye Men of Israel, hear these Words, Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God, among you, by Miracles, Wonders, and Signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye your selves also know. Him being delivered by the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked Hands have crucified and slain. --- Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.* Now, either these converted were Men of *Israel*, and such as had been Eye-witnesses of our Lord's Ministry, Miracles, Wonders and Signs, and personally concern'd in his Crucifixion, or not. If they were not, then the Inspired Historian has erred, for these are the very Persons said to be converted (a). If they were, then it seems manifest, they were Inhabitants and Residents in *Jerusalem*, and its Neighbourhood; seeing these were the People *he lived among*, and in the *midst of*, who had a remarkable and personal Hand in his Death, and were daily Witnesses to his *Signs, Wonders, and Miracles*. This could not be said of Strangers, actually having their Habitations in vastly distant Regions and Kingdoms throughout the *Roman Empire*, and who very seldom, if ever, had Access to come up to *Jerusalem*.

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(a) *Acts* 2. 37, 38, 39, 41.

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As to the Dispersion that happened on the Persecution which arose at *Stephen's* Death, it will not alter the Case of that Church, so as to render it one single Congregation. It is indeed said, *Acts* 8. 1. *And they were all scattered abroad except the Apostles.* Now, either this *All* is to be understood of the private Christians, or Members of that Church, or only those who were Officers, and had a Commission to preach the Gospel. That the *All* was not the private Christians, is manifest, in that it is said in the 3d Verse, *Saul made Havock of the Church, and entred into every House, and haling Men and Women, committed them to Prison.* And *Acts* 26. 10, 11. *And I punished them oft in every Synagogue.* Thus, it is evident, that the *All* that were scattered, is not to be understood of the Members of that Church. And besides, this is further confirmed from the Continuance of the Apostles in that Place, which is a plain Indication they were not without a Flock, and that there was still sufficient Work for them at *Jerusalem.* Therefore, the *All* spoken of, must be referred to them that were Office-bearers; and this is plainly supported from the 4 Verse, *They that were scattered abroad, went every where Preaching the Gospel.* And when it is said, they were all scattered *except the Apostles,* seems plainly to imply, that those who were scattered had a Sacred Office, such as the Extraordinary Prophets, who were in great Abundance in that Church, and of whom we have an Account, *Acts* 11. 27. And it is not without Foundation, or unreasonable, to think, that the Seventy Disciples were still there, till the Persecution came on, and so were among the Number of those that were scattered, and thereafter went every where Preaching the Gospel. And I cannot help thinking, that the
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Judgment of *Cajetan* on the Place, is very probable, namely, That the *All* was only those upon whom the *Holy Ghost* descended, *Acts* 4. 31. And these, by other learned Divines, are reckoned to be the Hundred and twenty Disciples. But after all, whatever the Number was that removed from *Jerusalem*, or the Persons, it does not affect our Argument, taken from the vast Numbers there were of Believers there, before the Persecution came on; and it is most plain, from the History of the *Acts*, that, afterwards, the Church had Rest, and was multiplied, so that there were many *Ten Thousands* in Her who believed, *Acts* 9. 31. & 21. 20.

A *Second* Consideration, for making it manifest there were several distinct Congregations at *Jerusalem*, is taken from the different Languages and Dialects that prevailed among the Disciples, and such as were Inhabitants in *Judea*. For clearing of this, let it be remembred, that there were a certain Sect of the *Jews*, which were called *Hellenists*, or *Gracizing Jews*, that were really so, both by Descent and Profession; but the Body of them being dispersed almost every where throughout the *Roman Empire*, they made Use of the *Greek Tongue* *, the most general Language of that Age, in their Publick Offices of Religion, and of the *Septuagint's* Translation of the *Old Testament*. On this Account they were called *Hellenists*, in Opposition to the other *Jews*, who, in their Worship, made Use of the *Hebrew Tongue*. The *Gracizing Jews* were very numerous in *Egypt*, *Lybia*, *Cyrene*, &c. but tho' they were both *Jews* by Descent and Profession, yet they were not in Esteem by the *Hebrew Jews*, by Reason of the Heathen Language they used,

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* *Lewls, Ubi supra. Pag. 32. 33.*

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and the Countries they had for a long Time inhabited. Besides, the Kingdom of *Judah* and *Israel* had undergone many Revolutions, on Account of their several Captivities, so that there was a Mixture of several Nations introduced among them, some of which became Profelytes of the Covenant, and hereby were accounted real *Jews*, and bound to the same Observances with them in the Matters of Worship. The *Jews* were but a Remnant of an often scattered, conquered and captivated People; and what remained of them entire, was only Two Tribes of Twelve; and these were Tributary to *Herod* and the *Romans*. So, at the Time of our Saviour's Coming, it is certain, the Inhabitants of *Canaan*, and *Jerusalem* itself, were a Composition of Foreigners and Native *Jews*; the former were, principally, *Grecians* and *Romans*, being the Reliques of the *Macedonian* Empire, and the *Roman*, to which they were then in Subjection; and the latter partly *Hebrews*, partly *Hellenists*. Now, that of all these there were Multitudes residing at *Jerusalem*, at the Time the Apostles were filled with the *Holy Ghost*, and particularly such of them as were devout Men, and waited for the Redemption of *Israel*, seems evident from *Acts* 2. 5. And there were dwelling in *Jerusalem*, *Jews*, devout Men, out of every Nation under Heaven, namely, *Parthians*, *Medes*, *Elamites*, *Dwellers in Mesopotamia*, *Judea*, *Cappadocia*, *Pontus*, *Asia*, *Phrygia*, *Pamphylia*, *Egypt*, *Libya*, *Cyrene*, *Strangers of Rome*, *Jews* and *Profelytes*, &c. These, says the Learned * *Witius*, abode at *Jerusalem*, for the Worshipping the true God. And indeed he takes them to be some, at least, of the Remains of the Ten Tribes, that had come up to *Jerusalem*, and taken Residence in the midst of the

* De decem. Trib. C. 7. Pag. 367. 368.

the *Jews*, properly so called. And when the Evangelist designs them by the Name of *Jews* in the 5th Verse, he accurately observes, That this Appellation is to be understood, as expressive of their Profession, and not of the Tribe of *Judah*; for, in the 11th Verse, he makes them to be *Jews*, who were either so by Descent and Religion, or Profelytes, who were not so by Descent, but by Profession. And it is worth Notice, that the Apostle *Peter*, in the 14th Verse, directs himself to the *Men of Judea*; but, in the 22d he stiles them, *Men of Israel*, and in the 36th, *All the House of Israel*. From which, it is reasonable to conclude, there were Part of all the Twelve Tribes present, when the Apostle delivered this remarkable and successful Sermon. And this is further evident, and their Residence at *Jerusalem* clearly discovered, from the Sixth of the *Acts*, where it is said, *There arose a Murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their Widows were neglected in the daily Ministration*. By this it is manifest, there were a certain Body of the *Hellenistical Jews* then residing at *Jerusalem*, who were incorporated with that Church, and had Claim to a Share of their common Stock, for the Support of their Widows, and such as were in straitning Circumstances. And beside what hath been said, if we consider, that the *Twelve Tribes were instant in serving of God Day and Night* (a), in Hope of the Accomplishment of the Promise concerning the *Messiah* and his Kingdom, and the many Prophecies that were made of the Lord's Gathering them into one Communion with *Judah*, from whom they had been for a long Time separate, at the Time of the Exhibition of Christ; it seems to be a Demonstration, that

(.) Acts 26. 7.

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this great Upcoming to *Jerusalem*, was, in some Measure, an Accomplishment of these Promises (a). Now, from the Whole, is it to be imagined, that the *Jews*, who had been brought up under the various Dialects of the *Greek Tongue*, and other Languages differing from that made Use of by the Native *Jews*, cou'd meet in one Congregation, and be edified by any one Pastor? Or, is it not most reasonable to think, that as the Lord had bestowed on the Apostles a Diversity of Languages; so they made Use of them, for the Edification of such as believed, and delivered the Wonderful Works of God in these different Tongues and Dialects that were best understood to the mixed Company then at *Jerusalem*? The Multitude out of which the Three thousand were converted (b), are expressly said to have different Languages and Dialects, and to have heard the Apostles speak in these, to their great Amazement and Wonder. Nay, is it to be imagined, That the Profelytes and *Græcizing Jews* were capable of understanding the Dialect made Use of, at that Time, among the *Hebrew Jews*, in the Land of *Judea*, or that both could be edified by one and the same Language? Besides, tho' the dispersed *Jews* might retain something of their Original Language; yet it will not say, they understood it so well as that in which they were daily versant, and had made Use of in the Countries wherein they were brought up. Or, is it to be thought, that the Profelytes, *Romans*, *Cappadocians*, *Crætiens* and *Arabians*, which made up a Part of that Multitude, were versant, in any Degree, in the *Hebrew Tongue*? Therefore, as it seems evident there was a Diversity of Tongues and Dialects

(a) Jer. 3. 12, 14. & 30. 3, 4. 10, 18, 21, 23, 24. Zech. 9. 9, 10. (b) Acts 2. 9, 10, 11, 12, 41.

lects among those who were converted at *Jerusalem*; so it must necessarily follow, That the Apostles, who followed Decency and Order in their Actings, and, at the same Time, made it their great Care to do all for Edification, did model the Believers they had gathered together into such Bodies or Congregations, as they might severally be instructed by those Languages, in which they were most versant, or best acquainted with. I cannot help thinking, that this being the State of the Christians at *Jerusalem*, it would be too injurious an Imputation on the Apostles, to imagine they were so regardless of the truest Interests of that Church, as to confine them to one single Congregation for Publick Worship, tho' their Numbers had been vastly inferior to what truly they were. And tho' some may object, that the *Jews*, every where, have the Knowledge of the *Hebrew* Language, and that in no Place there is any Body of them settled, but they read the Scriptures in their Publick Assemblies in that Tongue; and very rarely make Use of the *Chaldee* Paraphrase, and, no where, of the *Septuagint*; yet if any shall lay Stress on this, it must be the Fruit of Ignorance. For, tho' it be granted it is so now, and that the *Jews*, every where, in their Dispersion, make Use of the *Hebrew Language*; it will not thence follow, they did so before, at, and some Time after the Coming of the *Messiah*. For it is certain, the *Septuagint* or *Greek Version* of the **Old Testament* was made Use of among all the Churches of the *Hellenistical Jews*, wherever they were dispersed among the *Grecian Cities*, so that they came, thro' Course of Time, to lose the *Hebrew Tongue*. It is no less certain, That the *Jews*, after their Return from the

* Lewis Origin. Hebr. Pag. 332, 333.

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Babylonish Captivity, made Use of the *Chaldean* Dialect, and, in Process of Time, it became their Natural Tongue. And, as the Doctors of the *Jewish* Law found it necessary, in order to make the *Jews* understand the Text of the Holy Scriptures, after their Captivity, which they read in the *Hebrew* in their Synagogues, to explain it to them in the *Chaldean* Dialect, the Language they understood; so it was no less necessary for the Apostles to preach the Gospel to the Church of *Jerusalem*, in those different Languages and Dialects, which they were best acquainted with, and tended most for their Edification. And to complete this Argument, it must be considered, that after the *Gracizing Jews* laid aside the *Septuagint* in their publick Assemblies, they made Use of the *Greek* Version of *Aquila* the *Jew*. And, as the Author cited on the Margin observes, they continued in the Use of this, until the Finishing and Publication of both the *Talmuds*: But that, after that Time, it became a prevailing Notion among them, That the Scriptures were only to be read in their Synagogues, first in the Original *Hebrew*, and then, for Interpretation, in the *Chaldee*. To support this, and make it universally obtain, the Decrees of the *Jewish* Doctors were urged. And, in the Event, this had such Influence on that People, and raised them above the Difficulty of obtaining their own ancient Language, that, in a short Time after, they rejected both Versions, namely the *Septuagint*, and that of *Aquila* the *Jew*; and, ever since, made Use of the *Hebrew* Language in their Publick Assemblies. Now, this had its Rise from the Time of the Finishing and Publication of the two *Talmuds*, which was not till after the Death of *Dioctesian*, he being

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mentioned therein, and resigned his Government and Imperial Robes in the Year 304.

A *Third* Consideration for making it evident there were several Distinct Congregations in the Single Church of *Jerusalem*, is taken from the plurality of Church-Officers there were labouring in her. In this Church there remained, for several Years, Twelve Apostles, and afterwards they ordained a plurality of standing and Ordinary Pastors and Elders. The Eleven Apostles, to whom *Matthias* was added, immediately after our Lord's Ascension, went into an upper Chamber, where they were, for most, exercised in fervent Prayer and Supplication, and in an hourly Expectation of the Down-pouring of the Holy Ghost upon them, in consequence of their Master's (a) Promise. In this Place they continued for the Space of Ten Days, which, according to * *Matthias*, was the Space between our Lord's Ascension and the Day of *Pentecost*, when the extraordinary Gift of the Holy Ghost was conferred on them, whereby they were enabled to discharge their Office, and had a Call to appear publickly, in performing the several Branches thereof, *Acts* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. After this, they continued together in that City, and having gathered many to the Obedience of Christ, they ordained a Deaconship for taking Care of the Poor, and serving of Tables, *Acts* 6. We find them yet together in *Jerusalem*, at the Time of the Persecution, when others were dispersed, *Acts* 8. 1. After this, we find, that there were not only Apostles, but Presbyters or Elders in this Mother Church, *Acts* 11. 30. As to the Time of the Ordination of these Presbyters, it is not certain; but for any

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(a) *Acts* 1. 4, 8, 11, &c. * *Quat. Monarch.* Page 480.

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Thing that can be said, they might have been even before the Deacons. In the 15th Chapter, we find the Apostles and Elders meeting in a Judicial Manner, for determining Matters of publick Concern to the Church of Christ. It is further to be observed, that besides these, there were in the Church of *Jerusalem* a Plurality of Prophets, *Acts* 11. 27. Now, from this Account it manifestly appears, there was a Multitude of Apostles, Prophets and Presbyters, in the single Church of *Jerusalem*; and that all of them, for the most Part, resided, not one, but several Years in that Place. The Apostles remained there, not only during the Heats of Persecution, but the Time of Peace, and flourishing Condition of that Church; and their Work appears to have been so great, and their Charge so numerous, that to the End they might give themselves wholly to *Prayer, and the Ministry of the Word*, they set apart Seven Deacons to ease them of the Burden of the Poor, and serving of Tables. And it cannot well be imagined, how this could have been a sufficient Reason for Establishing that Order of Church-Officers, had there only been one single Congregation in the Church of *Jerusalem*; and far less is it conceivable, there was Work for Apostles, Prophets, and a Plurality of Presbyters, for One Meeting or Assembly of Believers. Nay, I cannot help thinking, that to find in One single Church Twelve Apostles, a Plurality of Prophets, and Ministers of the Word, besides Seven Deacons, it must, at once, furnish the unprejudiced Mind with an Idea of a Plurality of distinct Congregations. Nor is it of any Consequence, what is alleged by some *Independents*, namely, that there were many gifted Men, which were not Officers, that, as Occasion served, did instruct others, as *Aquila* did

did *Apollos*; and therefore, the Argument taken from the many Teachers in the Church of *Jerusalem*, will not establish, that there were many Congregations there. For, tho' it be granted, that in that inspired Age, (if I may so call it) there were not wanting Persons who were gifted, and occasionally taught others, as *Aquila* did *Apollos*, and, in the mean Time, were not in Office; yet this is no more than what an understanding Person may do, to any private Christian, at this very Day: Nay, in a private Manner to any Person. In a Word, either these gifted Men taught others privately, or publickly, and as Doctors. If in a private Manner, there is nothing in the Objection, that is of the smallest Force, seeing it is the Duty of every private Christian to contribute all they can, to advance the Knowledge of Christ in others; and this does not interfere with the Office of the Ministry, whose Business it is to teach publickly, and as Ambassadors of Christ: If in Publick, and Authoritatively; then the native Consequence would be, that Women were empower'd to teach publickly and authoritatively, seeing *Priscilla*, no less than *Aquila*, instructed *Apollos*. Besides, as the Generality of Commentators alledge, the Seventy Disciples were at *Jerusalem* with the Apostles, and are reckoned to be a Part of the 120 mentioned, *Acts* 1. 15. so these were all Teachers by Office; and this affords us a further Argument for a Plurality of Congregations in that Church, and makes it more than difficult to prove, that any gifted Persons taught, or had extraordinary Gifts conferred on them, except such as were publickly authorized to the Sacred Ministry.

A *Fourth* Argument or Consideration, for evincing a Plurality of Congregations in the Church
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of *Jerusalem*, is taken from the Circumstances of those Times, or their wanting capacious Houses or Temples for containing great Multitudes of People. It is indeed true, that during the Times of Peace, the Church of *Jerusalem* had Opportunities this Way, beyond any other Church of the World, at that Time, from the Access they might have unto the Temple, in which they might teach and instruct the People, and bring in moe of the *Jews* to the Faith of Christ. This was, no Doubt, one Reason of the Apostle's long Continuance in that Place. But all the Accounts we have of their going up into that glorious Building, give us not the least Intimation, That all the Believers in that Church met in one Assembly for publick Worship; were under the Instruction of one Pastor; or, that ever they celebrate the Holy Sacrament of the Supper in that Place. It is indeed said, that the Apostles went up daily unto the Temple; but, that the Church either assembled under the Instruction of one Apostle, or commemorate the Death and Sufferings of our Lord therein, is no where declared. And the Apostles frequent going up thither, was not so much on Account of the Convenience they had for assembling the Christians for publick Worship, as their having Access daily to the unconverted *Jews*, and making known unto them the Mystery of Christ, and Working Miracles for their Conviction. Therefore, as we have Accounts of their going up to the Temple, so of their Assembling the Christians *κατ' οἶκον*, that is, from House to House, in which they are said to break Bread, *Acts* 2. 46. And *Acts* 5. 42. it is said, *The Apostles ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ, daily in the Temple, and in every House.* This, according to *Cloppenburgius*, is to be understood of the Synagogues
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in *Jerusalem*, which, he says, were sometimes included under the general Apellation of the Temple; and were only competent to contain so many Myriads of Persons. But whatever is in this, it is plain from the Places abovementioned, That the Assemblies of Believers in *Jerusalem*, for publick Worship, were in different Houses; such as that of *Mary* (a); and in an upper Room (b); none of which could possibly contain all the Members of that Church. And it is very probable, that some of the 480 Synagogues were made Use of by numerous converted *Jews*, to be Places of Publick Christian Worship; which is confirmed from what the Apostle *Paul* saith, *Acts* 26. 10, 11. *Which Thing I also did in Jerusalem, --- and punished them oft in every Synagogue: --- And I persecuted them even unto strange Cities.*

From the Whole of what hath been said on this Head, it seems evident to a Demonstration, That the dividing of the Believers in the Church of *Jerusalem* into distinct Assemblies, for the Administration of such Ordinances as belonged unto them, was necessary; and without it, the Apostle's Rule of Doing all Things to Edifying, could not be obtained, their Numbers being vastly great; their Language and Dialects not the same; their Rulers many; and the Places to which they had free and uninterrupted Access, for performing the several Parts of religious Adoration, but private, or of no considerable Extent.

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(a) *Acts* 11. 12. (b) *Acts* 1. 13, 14, 15.

S E C T. VI.

The several Objections contained in the Explication of Mr. Glas's Proposition answered. A Fifth Argument, to the same Purpose, prosecuted in several Branches.

TO what hath been said, it is objected by a fresh Writer, before mentioned, That it is cross to the Spirit of God, to infer a Plurality of Congregations, from the Multitude of the Disciples, that were in the Church of Jerusalem. But to do him all Justice, his Words are these, *Page 8.* Now, besides that it cannot be made appear, That all the Multitudes were Members of the Church of Jerusalem, the Inference that is made from these Accounts of the Numbers, is plainly besides the Scope of the Holy Ghost, in speaking of the Numbers, which is not to shew, that the Disciples and Church Members in Jerusalem could not be one Congregation, and therefore ought to be many, under one common Presbytery. But the plain Scope --- is, to shew the great Power of the Grace of the Lord Jesus, by the Gospel, and the Accomplishment of the Old Testament Prophecies, in gathering Sinners to himself.

Thus far my Objector. To which it is answered, 1. That tho' it were granted, that all the Multitudes he mentions, were not Members of the Church of Jerusalem, yet it will by no Means follow, there were no more Believers there, than what could meet in one Congregation, hear distinctly, and be edified by the Preaching of one Apostle at a Time. But I would gladly know from my Objector, what became of these who were not Members of the Church of Jerusalem,

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or what Church they were Members of, seeing, for some Time, there was no other Christian Church in the World, besides this? Is it to be imagin'd they were really Christians, and yet no Members of the only Christian Church in the whole Universe? *Samaria* was the only Place where we first read of a Church's being planted, excepting this of *Jerusalem*, and that was not till after the Persecution of the Christians, on the Back of *Stephen's* Death. I cannot help thinking, it were too injurious an Impeachment of the blessed Apostles, to think that they suffered Multitudes of Christians to go away from *Jerusalem*, and to wander without Shepherds, and be cast off from being Members of any Christian Society. But of this there is enough said before; and seeing my *Author* insinuates they were not Members, he is bound, in all Justice, to give some tolerable Proof of it.

2. It is surprising to hear one, with so much Confidence, assert, That it is not the Scope of the Holy Ghost to let us see that the Numbers of the Disciples and Church Members in *Jerusalem* could not be one single Congregation. Have all the Presbyterians, to this Day, been so blind, or so far under the Influence of Prejudice, that they could not perceive, or wilfully overlookt the Scope of this Portion of sacred Writ, till our *Author* should put them in mind of it? Does not the Inspired Penman of the *Apostolical Acts* give us to see, in the strongest Terms, what great Multitudes were Converted at *Jerusalem*, and expressly say, That there were devout Jews dwelling at *Jerusalem*, out of every Nation under Heaven? And does not *Peter* expressly address himself to the Men of *Judea*, and all ye that dwell at *Jerusalem*? Is
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* Acts 2. 5. 14.

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not this, together with the frequent Mention that is made in the *Acts*, of the Apostles Continuance for a long Time at *Jerusalem*, a plain Indication to all future Ages, That it was the Design of Heaven, they should observe the vast Numbers of Converts that were in that Church? And does not the Evangelist's mentioning the daily Increase that was made of Believers, to this Church, till they came to Myriads, or many Ten Thousands, and the Establishment that was made of a Plurality of Elders and Deacons therein, together with the Diversity of Tongues and Dialects that were among the Christians, plainly point forth what was the obvious Scope of the Holy Ghost, *namely*, That there behoved, of Necessity, to be several distinct Assemblies of Believers, for Publick Worship, in that Place? Now, is there any Thing here in the least inconsistent, with God's Design of shewing forth the great Power of the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Gospel, and the Accomplishment of the *Old Testament Prophecies*? And I hope it will not be refus'd, by any unprejudiced Mind, that the Conversion of Multitudes, in that famous City, from which the Law was to go forth, was a Gathering of Sinners to Christ.

But my Objector adds, *if we had the least Hint of their being divided into several Congregations, then the Inference would have the more Weight; but that seems to be a Thing much avoided, in the Account we have of the Church of Jerusalem.* If our Author mean, That if there had been such express Words, as *Congregations*, or *divided into Congregations*, set down in the Sacred History, it would have had weight with him; I must say, in that Case, there was no Need of any Inference. But I humbly conceive, tho' there be no such express

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Words in the Scriptures, as *Trinity*, *Sacrament*, *Infant Baptism*, and *Women's Partaking* of the Holy Sacrament of the Supper; yet all of them are contained therein, materially, and are deducible theretrom, by lawful and necessary Consequence. And I cannot help thinking, that when we find, from the Dictates of the Holy Ghost, that there were 500 Disciples saw Christ at once, 3000 afterwards added to these, and then 5000, which, in all, make 8500, together with several other Additions of Multitudes that were made to them, there is more than a bare *Hint* of that Church's being divided into several distinct Congregations. Is it to be thought, that such a large Number as Nine or Ten Thousand Persons could all meet in one Place, hear distinctly, and be edified by one Person at a Time? This is a Thing, in itself, not to be imagined; and so much the more, that these were not all of one Language; which renders the Thing, in itself, impossible; unless it could be proven, they had all the Gift of Tongues, as well as the Apostles: But this is expressly contrary to the Apostle's Reasoning, 1 Cor. 12. 29, 30. *Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers? Do all speak with Tongues?* Besides, the Supposition of such a Thing, that there was but one Congregation at *Jerusalem*, makes still Eleven of the Apostles to be Hearers, and one of them but to preach at a Time; whereas, the many Thousands of Christians, that, by this Time, were in *Jerusalem*, afforded each of the Twelve a competent Number of Auditors. And it is still to be considered, that, by the daily Additions that were made to this Church, there were evidently more than the Members themselves, that conven'd to hear the Preaching of the Word; otherwise, how could

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could Numbers be daily brought into it? There must certainly be a strange Byass in the Minds of those, who place so much Virtue in this Circumstance, meeting in one Congregation, as will make them have Eleven of the Apostles still to be Hearers, and the Seventy Disciples also, who were unquestionably, at this Time, in *Jerusalem*, This being an Age, in which the Spirit was poured forth on all Flesh, the Harvest was truly great, and innumerable Crouds of People flocked together to hear the Preaching of the Gospel; and yet, for all this, there must be but one Congregation in that famous City, and no Access for any of the Apostles, or Seventy Disciples, to preach to Christians, at one Time, but one; Can it miss to be strange and surprising to any unprejudiced Considerer? At this Rate of thinking, there was no Force in the Apostles Reasoning, when they made Choice of the Deacons, *namely*, their being forced to *Leave the Word*, and *serve Tables*; nor for what is afterwards added, that they would give themselves *continually to Prayer, and the Ministry of the Word*. For, upon Supposition, that there was but one single Congregation at *Jerusalem*, during the Time we are just now speaking of, there was no more needful, but one Apostle to preach to them at a Time; and so, there was no Reason for appointing seven Deacons to ease them of a Burden; for Eleven of them were as capable to serve Tables as they, and their doing of it, did not impede their Preaching to one Assembly for Publick Worship, by Turns. And what is more, if they preached only by Turns, they gave not themselves *continually to Prayer, and to the Ministry of the Word*; for frequently they were Hearers, and not Preachers. But sure it is, this alternate

nate Way of preaching was not what the Apostles were trained up with, by their Great and Adorable Master, seeing, in the Days of his Flesh, when he sent them forth to preach *The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand*, they were sent *Two and Two*; each of them had his Work; and this was a Practice observed by them on after Occasions. And so I perswade my self, that every one who impartially considers the whole Circumstances of the Church of *Jerusalem*, by the History we have of it, will see there is more than a bare Hint of its being divided into several Congregations; and that it is so far from being *avoided*, that from the plain Discoveries that are given us thereof, it is a Thing that possibly could not be otherwise, without a Miracle. And so, there is no Foundation for what my *Objector* afterwards adds, as to the Opportuneness of the Season, for making several Congregations at *Jerusalem*, for remedying the Evil that arose by the *Grecian Widows* being neglected in the daily Ministration; because it is beyond Question, there were, before that Time, separate and distinct Congregations in that Church; and his asserting the Contrary, is but a Begging of the Question. But he adds, *And they that insist upon this Inference, from the Number of the Disciples in that Church, allow no Place for Deacons, but in a Congregation.* But what of all this? Greater and more Learned Men than ever my *Author* or I shall be all our Days, have given it as their Opinion, There were Seven Deacons chosen, and set apart for Seven Congregations; But what the precise Number of Assemblies in that Church were, cannot, from Sacred Writ, be determined. From the Number of Disciples we have an Account of, and the other Considerations

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that have been adduced, it plainly appears, there were no fewer than Seven Congregations, but rather more. And my *Author* must reflect, that the Church of *Scotland* hath, ever since the Reformation, insisted for a Plurality of Congregations in *Jerusalem*, from the vast Multitudes of Believers that were in that Church; and, at the same Time, acknowledged, there may be both Deacons and Elders common to several distinct Congregations. Are there not two Congregations in *Perth; Dundee, Aberdeen* and *Inverness*; and yet but one Common Session? And were there not six different Congregations in the City of *Edinburgh*, upon the Back of the Reformation; and yet they had but one Common Session, till afterwards it was born down by the prevailing Power of Episcopacy? So, at the Bottom, this Objection does not, in the smallest Degree, affect our Argument, or bear the least Opposition to Presbyterian Principles. But my *Author* goes on, *They are also obliged to own, that there were no different fixed Congregations in Jerusalem, but that they assembled in different Places, promiscuously; and were all under the Common Oversight of the Apostles, &c.* But who told my *Author* this? Is there any publick Deed of the Church of *Scotland* declaring so much unto him? But in the First Place, I perswade my self, that it would be a Matter wholly impossible for any *Independent* to make it good, That the Congregations were not distinguished and fixed in *Jerusalem*, during the Apostles residing in that famous Church. Can it well be imagined, without an Impeachment of the Apostles, who, for the most Part, had their Residence for many Years at *Jerusalem*, not only during the Heats of Persecution, but during the Times of Peace and Quiet, that all
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this While, they would have left that Church in irregular Circumstances, been at no pains to establish her Constitution, and make up her orderly distinct Meetings for Publick Worship.

In the *next* Place, it hath no Influence on our present Establishment, whether they were really distinct fixed Congregations, or not, so as that there were so many precisely to this Place of Meeting, and a particular fixed Pastor to preach to them, and so many to another Place, and a fixed Minister to them; for, in both Cases, it is equally manifest, That there being distinct Assemblies in *Jerusalem* for Publick Worship, and these from Time to Time provided with a Pastor to administer Word and Sacraments, they were under the Ecclesiastical Government of their several Rulers assembled in one Class or Presbytery. Our *Directory for Worship* does indeed make this Supposition, but by no Means owns there were no fixed Congregations; so that I do not know what Authority my *Author* had to say, It was acknowledged by the Presbyterians. But he goes on, *But this is to give up the Cause of different fixed Congregations under one Common Presbytery, and strike out Sessions; and makes the Church of Jerusalem some Thing very near a Kin to one Congregation.* Will the striking out of Sessions, in a particular Congregation, give any Favour to *Independent Principles*? I do indeed own, there is a Foundation for Congregational Sessions in Sacred Oracles, and so am very far from striking them out; yet I must freely confess, I think it will be much easier to give a positive Instance or Example for a Presbytery, than a particular Congregational Session. In this I agree with the Learned *Hudson*, *On the Essence and Unity of the Church, &c.* Page 9.

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It seems, saith he, difficult to me, to find in the Scripture, an expresse Instance or Example of a Congregational Church, standing and continuing so by itself: The Church of Cenchrea, mentioned Rom. 16. 1. is the most probable, because of the conceived smallness of the Place; yet it is not certain, for it was a Port Town.----- But, in the next Place, will the Presbyterian Cause be given up, upon granting there were not a Plurality of fixed Congregations in the Church of Jerusalem, both as to Ministers, and Assemblies of Believers? I shall make this Supposition of the City of Edinburgh, which hath Nine distinct Congregations of People, or Assemblies meeting for Publick Worship, that all their Nine Churches are every Lord's Day crouded full of People, out of the whole Body of Professors that are there, without being divided into certain Precincts, to go regularly to this or the other Place of Meeting; and their Ministers are as little fixed as they, any further than what is agreed upon from Time to Time among themselves: Will this make One Assembly of Christians, meeting in one Place, for publick Worship, or near a Kin to one Congregation? Or, because that Metropolis hath fixed certain Precincts and Parishes within its own Bounds, and, for Ordinary, two Ministers to each of these Parishes; therefore it hath given up the Cause of Presbytery, and thrown off the Apostolical Example of the Church of Jerusalem? I perswade my self, this Way of Reasoning, as it would misken itself, if cast into the Form of a Syllogism; so it would be cross to all the Rules of Decency and Order that the Apostle lays down to be observed till the End of Time. Thus granting, That the Circumstances of the Apostles, when introducing a New Religion

Religion into the World, were sometimes such, that by the Opposition they met with from the Unbelieving *Jews* on the one Hand, and the Heathens on the other, they could not arrive at that Regularity and Order which they desired, in having particular fixed Congregations to assemble for Publick Worship in this Place by themselves; and such another particular Precinct in another Corner of a large City, &c. but were obliged to assemble themselves into so many Bodies as could be edified by the Ministers that were set over them, without being stated and classed into formal and constant distinct Congregations: I say, will it thence follow, when the Circumstances of Time are altered, and both Magistrates and the People, in a Kingdom or Province, profess themselves Christians, subject to Gospel Ordinances, and are willing that all Methods of Decency and Order be taken for their Edification, that we are not to embrace these favourable Seasons? this were no better Way of Reasoning, than, that because our Lord assembled with his Apostles, in an Upper Room, and at Night, where he institute the Holy Sacrament of his Supper, therefore these Circumstances must be still kept by in the Church in all future Ages. It cannot miss to be surprising to every Judicious Christian, to imagine, that any one should have advanced, That because the Apostles could not, through the Oppositions they met with, arrive at regular Managements; therefore, tho' these are removed from us, we must not follow the exprefs Command of Christ, and do all Things *Decently and in Order*, and as may be most for Edification. But, after all, I look upon it as too injurious an Imputation on a Church, which was so long a Time under the immediate

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Direction of the blessed Apostles, to imagine they did not embrace the Times of Peace, and fix themselves into such a competent Number of Congregations, as was best suited to the Edification of that Sacred Body, and came up, as near as might then be, to that becoming Order and Regularity which is the great Ornament and Beauty of Christian Society. Thus, I leave my *Author's* Preamble to his Arguments, and subject it to the serious Thoughts of every Judicious Christian, how much Charity there is in his saying, *There must be something else than the Influence of Scripture Light, and a Regard to some other Thing, than the consisting of Scripture with itself at the Bottom of this Way of doing.* Have all the Ministers of the Church of Scotland, and the greatest Body of the Reformed Churches, cast off that Regard which is due to the Sacred Oracles, and the Design of the Spirit of God therein, and the consisting of Scripture with itself, because they maintain there was a Plurality of Congregations in the Church of *Jerusalem*? Where are the noised Clamours of *Charity*, so much pretended to by some? This noble Christian Vertue, *doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.* But it seems, some will satisfy themselves with the Name of being Charitable, tho' they cast off the Thing, and what is truly intended by it; and will judge the Hearts of others, and bring themselves in Danger of being judged. I persuade my self, that this *Author* will have very few, if any one *Independent* in *Great Britain*, that will join him in this uncharitable and assuming Charge against the Presbyterians.

I come, next, to my *Authors* Scripture Arguments, for Establishing there was but one single Con-

Congregation of Christians in the Church of Jerusalem. And the first is, Page 10. from *Acts* 2. 41, 42. *The same Day there was added unto them above Three thousand Souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles Doctrine, and Fellowship, and in Breaking of Bread, and in Prayers, Ver. 44. And all that believed were together, Ver. 46. And they continued daily with one accord in the Temple, Ver. 47. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.* If there be any Thing in these Scriptures, that can be said to have the Appearance of an Argument for one single Congregation in the Church of Jerusalem, it must ly in these Two Expressions, *And all that believed were together; and they continued daily with one accord in the Temple.* As to the First of these, *And all that believed were together*, ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, it is to be considered, 1. That tho' it were granted, this Expression might be constructed, in this Place, for proving the Apostles and the Three Thousand that were converted to have been in one Place; yet it will not prove, That after their Number was increased to Eight or Ten Thousand; which, at a moderate Computation, we may conclude they were, by the Time of the Election of the Deacons; they were then but one Assembly; when the Thing, in its own Nature, was impossible. At this Time, there were only 3000 converted, and the 500 that saw Christ before his Ascension; and my *Author* does not alledge this Expression to be made use of after they were come to have 5000 added to them, together with vast Numbers that are indefinitely exprest, till they are said to be *many Ten Thousands.* And so there is no more Force in this Way of Reasoning, than for one to say, if 3500 made up one single Congregation,

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gregation, Ten, Twenty or Thirty should do the same. But this is such a Consequence, that no Man in his right Wits will attempt to make it good.

2. The Expression on which this Argument is built, will not bear the Sense that is alledged, or import they were in one and the same Place. And I can give my *Author* another Place in the *New Testament*, than what he has been pleased to direct us to in his Margin, where it possibly cannot denote one Place; namely, *Acts* 4. 25, 26. *Why did the Heathen rage, and the People imagine vain Things? The Kings of the Earth stood up, and the Rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. Here, gathered together, is, in the Original, συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ.* Now, is it to be learned from any Part of the Sacred Oracles, that *Herod, Pontius Pilate* and the *Kings of the Earth*, with the *Rulers*, assembled together in one Place against the Lord and his Christ? The obvious Meaning then must be, that they were of one Mind and Affections in this Combination; and this exactly agrees with the Context here, and points forth the Oneness of Judgment and Affections that was among the first Christians, in the Matters of Christ, and Doctrine of the Apostles. And the learned Dr. *Lightfoot* gives us to know, that the Original Expression is made use of by the 70 Interpreters, to denote an Assembly or Concourse of People sometimes in the same Body, *Judg.* 6. 33. & *19.* 6. sometimes in the same State and Condition, *Isa.* 66. 17. *Jer.* 6. 12. at other Times, in the same Action, tho' in different Places and Assemblies, *2 Sam.* 2. 13. *Psal.* 34. 3. & 49. 2, &c. Thus also it is taken, *Psal.* 2. 2. from whence that Passage *Acts* 4. 25, 26. is taken. Thus, it is obvious, that

that the Original Phrase rendred *together*, is not always in Sacred Writ, to be taken collectively, but distributively; and so, it may be said, that all the Congregations in *Scotland* meet together on the Lord's Day; for they are all about the same Action of Publick Worship, and profess to be of one Mind and Affections in the Matters of Religion, and Things of Eternal Concern. Thus, I leave it to every unbyass'd Reader, to consider what is in this Expression, to determine his Mind, that all the Christians in *Jerusalem*, assembled in one and the same Place for Publick Worship, and were instructed by one single Pastor. As to *Acts* 2. 1. which is one of his marginal Texts, there is nothing there, in the Context, to hinder us to believe the Apostles were together in the same Place; but this will not say, that this Expression is universally to be taken in that Sense. As to *Acts* 3. 1. where it is said, *Now Peter and John went up together into the Temple*, it has no Respect to the Oneness of Place in which the Apostles were, but denotes the Time of their going up thither; and this exactly agrees with the last Verse of the preceding Chapter. And so some of the Original Copies have it, *ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις*, about this Time, *Peter and John went up*; and agreeably to this, 'tis rendred by our most accurate Criticks, *circa idem tempus*. But sure it is, however our *Author* takes these Words, it does not in the least affect the present Cause, or has the smallest Influence to support what he alledges. For the Expression is variously taken; and therefore there is nothing can determine its Meaning, or make a conclusive Argument from it, but the Context in which it stands. And I cannot help thinking, that 'tis a very fallible Way of Reasoning, when the Argument

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ment is founded merely on the Force of an original Expression, when it is manifest, it is variously taken by Sacred Writers ; unless it can be supported from the Context, and much more when it is adduced to prove a Thing, which, in its own Nature, cannot be true ; namely, That all the vast Multitudes that were in the Church of *Jerusalem*, made up but one single Congregation.

The next Thing to be considered, is, *And they continued daily with one accord in the Temple*. Here let it be observed, *First*, that as yet we have only an Account of the Conversion of 3000, and so, as was observed on the former Head, there can be no Argument drawn from it, to make any Man believe, that when all the after Multitudes, mentioned in the *Acts* were added to these, they still made up but one single Congregation. III.

2. The Original Word *ὁμοθυμαδόν*, render'd *with one accord*, will, by no Means, bear the Sense that is put upon it, and prove that all those mentioned in the Text, assembled in one numerical Meeting for Publick Worship. The common and natural Import of the Expression is no more, but that the Christians were of *one Heart*, and of *one Mind*, in the Matters of Christianity, and Truths of the Gospel delivered to them by the Apostles : And there is nothing in it, that denotes the Union, or personal Conjunction of these Believers, in any one individual Place. And I desire, that my *Author* will give me any one disinterested Person, who is skilled in the *Greek* Language, that will say, that this Original Word hath any other Signification, but Oneness of Mind among rational Agents, or, that ever it denotes, their being locally in one Place, unless there be something joined with it, by which so much is expressed.

3. And

3. And as for their being *with one accord in the Temple*, it proves nothing; seeing it is certain they had not, as yet, disjoined themselves from the Body of the *Jews*, and cast off the Ceremonial Usages. It is not said they were in the Temple in one Assembly, and in one Place therein, hearing the Word preached by one Apostle at a Time, or partaking of the Holy Sacrament of the Supper. For, on Supposition they had Access to the Temple, in order to perform all the Parts of Religious Worship; yet considering the Variety of Apartments there were therein, the vast Largeness of the Court of the *Gentiles*, and other Conveniencies that were under the Pillars on the Uttermost Wall thereof, they may be said, in all Propriety of Speech, to be with One accord in that Glorious Fabrick, tho' divided into as many separate Bodies as there were Apostles. Besides, if my Author had transcrib'd the whole of the Text, every ordinary Reader would have seen, that it expressly makes against what he design'd to obtrude upon the Credulous; for it immediately follows, *and breaking of Bread from House to House*, *καὶ οὖτως τὸ κατ' οἶκον ἀρτοφάγον.* And thus, it is also, *Acts 5. 42.* *And daily in the Temple, and in every House, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ.* Now, is it to be imagined, that when the Apostles went up daily into the Temple, that one of them only preached at a Time to all the People that were present therein? Or, is it not most reasonable to think, that they divided themselves into separate Places, or Apartments, and there preached and taught Jesus Christ, to such Bodies of Christians, and others, as conveniently could hear them? All this will not denominate them one Congregation or Assembly of Christians, because they were with-
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in the Walls of this amazing Building, made up of a Variety of different Apartments, where they could assemble themselves into as many distinct Congregations as they had a Mind, without interfering, or incommoding one another, in any Part of Religious Worship. The High Church of *Glasgow* hath Three distinct Congregations in it, and there is as much Room besides, as might contain one or two more; but their being in that Huge Building all at one Time, will no more denominate them one single Assembly for Publick Worship, meeting in the same individual Place, under the Instruction of one Pastor, than if they were at some Miles Distance.

Moreover, they are expressly said to *break Bread*, and *preach Jesus Christ from House to House*; which clearly demonstrates, they did not all assemble together in one Place of Meeting, and make up one single Congregation, for the Participation of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or being edified by the Publick Ministry of the Word. The Phrase, *breaking of Bread*, is an usual Term by which the Holy Ordinance of the Supper is express'd in the *New Testament*, Acts 2. 42. & 20. 7. And it is here said, that this was gone about from House to House, which, in the strongest Terms, points forth, that it was performed in different Congregations; it not being supposable, that any one House in *Jerusalem*, besides the Temple, was able to contain so many Thousand Christians as were in that Church. That that Holy Ordinance was ever administred publicly in the Temple, is not credible: For, tho' the Apostles (a) were arraign'd before the *Sanhedrin* for teaching in the Temple; yet we never find it was any Part of their Indictment, that they had Commemorate the Death of
their

(a) Acts 4. 1.

their Lord by a New Sacrament therein: And it is not to be imagined, but if they had gone up to the Temple with so many Thousands, and there openly celebrate that solemn Gospel Ordinance, so contrary to Humane Reason, to all the *Jewish* Feasts, Ceremonies and Sacrifices; that it should not have been brought against them, and they accused of overturning *Moses* and the *Law*, no Part of the Bread and Wine, which they made Use of, being offered on the Altar. But there is not, any where, the least Intimation of their being impeach'd on that Head. And indeed, tho' our Lord taught in the Temple; yet he betook himself, with his Disciples, into a private and retired Room, when he first instituted that Sacrament: And we have no Account that ever his Apostles did otherwise. That they did it from House to House, or in every House, as the * Original Phrase may be rendred, is expressly declar'd; and this may suffice for the first Scripture Argument.

The next Argument alledged, is, *Acts* 4. 31, 32. *And when they had prayed, the Place was shaken where they were assembled together. And the Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart and of one Soul.* To which it is answered, First, That Oneness of Heart and Affection did prevail in this first Christian Church, is granted; but will this say they were one single Congregation, ordinarily meeting in the same Place, to be edified by the Preaching of one Pastor at a Time? Oneness of Heart and Affections is very consistent with a Plurality of Congregations; and where this noble and supernatural Virtue arises from Oneness of *Faith*, *Hope* and *Spirit*, the meer Circumstance of the Place of Meeting for Publick Worship, whether it be

* *Luke* 8. 1. *Tim.* 1. 5. *Acts* 14. 23.

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be in one, or in many different Assemblies, will, by no Means, quench it, as their being of the same individual Congregation in itself, cannot be the Cause thereof.

Secondly. Its being said, *When they had prayed, the Place was shaken, where they were assembled,* is as little Probative of the Church of *Jerusalem's* being one single Congregation, unless it could be made good from the Context, that that whole Church was assembled in that Place which was shaken. If we shall look back to the Beginning of this Chapter, we find that *Peter* and *John* were put in Prison for preaching in the Temple, and the Success of their Sermons is computed to be about 5000. Now, either these are the Persons assembled together, or not. If it was, these did not make up the whole Church of *Jerusalem*, seeing we read of 3000 converted before that Time, besides vast other Additions that are said to be made to them, which were more than what was able to make up another Congregation. And so this cannot be probative of there being but one single Congregation of Believers in *Jerusalem*. If these were not the Persons that were assembled together, there must be as little of an Argument for our Author's Purpose from this Text.

Thirdly. It must be observed, it was the next Day after the Conversion of the 5000, before *Peter* and *John* were taken out of Prison, and examined before the *Sanhedrin*; and after they were let go by the Priests, and Captain of the Temple, it is said, they returned to their own Company, ἡλθον πρὸς τὰς ἰδίας. But it is as uncertain who this Company was, or where they were assembled. 'Tis nowhere said in the Context, that this Company was made up of all the Believers in that Church. Besides,

fides, ἰδοι, render'd *their own Company*, is not in Sacred Writ, so far as I can learn, made Use of to express a whole Church, but particular Friends or Domesticks, as in *Mark* 5. 19. Compared with *Luke* 8. 39. *Gal.* 6. 10. *1 Tim.* 5. 8. We have an Account much like this, *Acts* 12. 12. where *Peter*, after his miraculous Deliverance out of Prison, came into the *House of Mary*, where were many gathered together, praying; and so, it is most probable, it was in the present Case. And here I cannot miss to observe, That when the Holy Ghost would point forth to us, Persons meeting together in the same Place, and concurring in the same Action, he does not express it by *ὁμοθυμαδόν*, with one accord, but by *ἱκανοὶ συνήσποισμεν*, gathered together.

Fourthly. It is as little said, where *their own Company* was met; the Temple it could not be; seeing the Shaking of it would have made much Noise among the whole *Jews*, and been look'd upon as very ominous; and it could not be thought, in this Case, that the Sacred Historian would have only given a bare Hint of it. Besides, the Temple is never barely called the Place, without something being adjected to it, by which it is characterized, and plainly pointed forth. And so, it is most probable, it was some private House in *Jerusalem*, which, possibly, could not contain so many Thousands of People, as, by this Time, were in that Church. Nor is it said that this *Company* were assembled together for the Preaching of the Word, or Partaking of the Holy Sacrament of the Supper; but only for Prayer; which seems plainly to point forth, it was an Assembly of some small Number in one Place; for it is not supposeable, that the whole Church did convene openly, at a Time when the High Priests and Rulers were perfe-

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persecuting the Apostles, and had dragged them out of the Temple, for Teaching and Preaching to the People. From the whole, it is impossible to draw any Conclusion from the Text alledged by my *Author*, to be a Proof there was but one Congregation in the Church of *Jerusalem*.

The next Scripture he adduceth for a Proof of this Head, is, *Acts* 5. 12, 13. *And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch, and of the rest, durst no Man joyn himself to them, but all the People magnified them.* Here my *Author* seems to lay a great Stress, and adds, in his Marginal Note, *The Holy Ghost tells us expressly of the Place where they all assembled with one accord, Solomon's Porch.* But let us examine it a little, and I perswade my self, there is nothing in this Text that makes for his Purpose, or the Reference he makes to *Acts* 3. 11. & 4. 4.

And, in the *First Place*, That the Apostles and the Church of *Jerusalem* were in the Entry of *Solomon's Porch*; which seems to be the Notion my *Author* frames to himself; as it is in it self impossible, the Entry of that Gate, according to our best *Jewish* Antiquarians, not being above Seven Yards and a Half, in Breadth, and Fifteen in Length; so it is not asserted in the Text, nor will the Construction of the Words bear any such Meaning. It is said, on the surprising Death of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *Great Fear came upon all the Church, and upon as many as heard these Things*, Ver. 11. And it is added in the 12th, *And by the Hands of the Apostles were many Signs and Wonders wrought among the People.* Now, it follows in a *Parenthesis*, *And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch, and of the rest durst no Man joyn himself to them, but the People magnified them.* Now, the

the Question is, Who were the **THEY ALL**, to whom the **REST** durst not joyn themselves? This cannot be understood of the Apostles and the Church, to whom the People durst not joyn: For, 1. It is contrary to the Natural and Grammatical Construction of the Words, to make δι παντες *they all*, to be constructed with ὅλην τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, *the whole Church*, or πάντας τὰς ἀκούσας ταύτας, *as many as heard these Things*. 2. There is the same Reason given why the Church durst not joyn themselves to the Apostles, as there is of the People, *namely*, the great Fear that came upon all the Church, and as many as heard these Things; the Death of Ananias and Sapphira. These two had made a Profession of the Christian Faith, and were externally Members of the Church; and so, the sudden and surprising Judgment that was inflicted on them for their Hypocrisie and Dissimulation, struck Fear and Amazement on all the rest of the Disciples, as well as the *Jews* that heard thereof, on which Account they durst not joyn themselves in Nearness to the Apostles. 3. It is further to be observed, That the **THEY ALL**, and **THEM**, to whom the rest durst not joyn, must be understood of the same Persons, or the **THEM** which the People magnified, on Account of the Miracles that were wrought. Now, it is not said, That the Miracles, Signs or Wonders wrought among the People, were performed by the Hands of the Church, but the Apostles: Therefore, it is these to whom the *Rest* durst not joyn themselves; and not the Apostles and the Church, as if the Unbelieving *Jews* durst not joyn themselves to them. 4. If it had been meant, that only the Unbelieving *Jews* durst not joyn themselves to the Apostles and Believers; then the inspired Penman would have made Use of an Expres-

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sion by which it might easily appear, namely, τῶν δὲ ἄλλων, but of *Others*, or *Strangers*, durst no Man joyn himself; wherdas it is τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν, of *the Rest*; which the Learned Dr. *Lightfoot* says, seems clearly to point at the rest of the Disciples or Members of the Church. But,

2. That this Matter may appear in a clear Light, it must be observed, that the Place which went under the Name of *Solomon's Porch*, both under the Temple of *Solomon*, that of *Zerubbabel*, and that of *Herod*, was not the mere Entrance of the East Gate to the Outer Temple; but the Whole of the East Wall, which was built by *Solomon*, at an extraordinary Expende, raising the Foundation thereof with great Stones, from the Bottom of the deep Valley that lay beneath, and was in length 500 Cubits, or 250 Yards. It is further to be considered, that the whole Length of this Wall within, there were Walks or Cloysters from each Side of the Entry of the Porch to the Ends of the Wall, that were supported by a Treble Row of Marble Pillars, into a double Walk, which was in Breadth 30 Cubits, or 15 Yards. The Innermost of these Pillars was joyned to the Wall, and this made the two Walks to be divided in the Middle by a Row of Pillars. Again, between the Outmost Row of these Pillars, and opposite to this Porch, there was a Space of Ground which belonged to the Court of the *Gentiles*, of 10 Cubits, before we came to the *Beautiful Gate*, or East Entry to the Inner Temple. Now, the whole of this Breadth, from the Wall on which the Innermost Row of Pillars stood, to the *Beautiful Gate*, together with the Length of the said Wall, which was 500 Cubits, was, according to Dr. *Lightfoot*, the Learned * Mr. *Selden*,

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Selden, and † *Mr. Lewis*, denominate *Solomon's Porch*. Thus then, *Solomon's Porch* was in Length, 500 Cubits, and in Breadth 100. And on the South Side of the Entry thereof, was joyned that large and spacious Court, commonly called the *Court of the Gentiles*, which, according to *Selden*, frequently went under the Name of *Solomon's Porch*. This Court was, in Breadth, about 270 Cubits, and, in Length, from the East Corner of the Inner Temple, West-ward, 400. From this plain View of *Solomon's Porch*, it is easy to perceive, that both the Apostles, the Disciples, and People of the *Jews*, might be contained therein, and the former might be with one accord by themselves, and neither the Church, nor Unbelieving Multitude, durst joyn themselves near unto them, on the Grounds formerly mentioned. Here it was they performed many *Signs* and *Wonders* among the People, and they, upon perceiving thereof, were made to magnify them, and Multitudes both of Men and Women were induced to believe. But, in all that we can learn from the Context, there is not the least Intimation of their Preaching on this Occasion, or Conveening the Church into One Congregation, in order to dispense Word and Sacraments unto them. And I wish my *Author* had been at more Pains to have framed a Notion, and given us a clear Account what he understood by *Solomon's Porch*, before he had made a bare Alledgance of its being larger in the last Temple than it was in the first. And I'm of the Mind, when he takes second Thoughts, he will find it is not sufficient, tho' it were granted to him, that both the Apostles and whole Church were in *Solomon's Porch*, to make them but One single Congregation, under the Instruction of One

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Pastor at a Time ; seeing it was sufficient to have contained as many distinct Assemblies for Publick Worship, as there were Apostles, without incommoding one another for Want of Bounds. Their being assembled in that Place for Publick Worship, can no more be a conclusive Argument for making the whole Believers in the Church of *Jerusalem* one single Congregation, than the Assembly of many Multitudes in *St. Paul's Church at London*, can denominate or make all of them one single Flock, under the Ministry of one Pastor at a Time.

3. The Description we have given of this Royal Porch, will give us an easy Answer to the other two Texts alledged by my *Author*, and set down in his Margin, for a Confirmation of the former, namely, *Acts* 3. 11. & 4. 4. For, this Porch, as I have already describ'd it, exactly agrees with what is said by the Inspired Pen-man of the *Acts*. It is said, *Acts* 3. 2. That the lame Man was laid daily at the Gate of the Temple, which is called Beautiful, that is, the East Gate of the Inner Temple, opposite to the Entry of *Solomon's Porch*, and at the Distance of 100 Cubits ; and so he was lying within the Compass of that large Space of Ground, which bore the Name of *Solomon's Porch*. Agreeable to this, it is said, *Acts* 3. 11. And as the lame Man which was healed, held Peter and John, all the People ran together unto them, in the Porch that is called *Solomon's*. In this Place or vast Court, we find, that both *Peter* and *John* preached unto the People ; for it is said, *Acts* 4. 1, 2. And as they spake unto the People, the Priests and the Captain of the Temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the People, and preached through *Jesus the Resurrection from the Dead*.

Now,

Now, it is added in the 4th Verse, *Howbeit, many of them which heard the Word believed, and the Number of the Men was about 5000.* From which, it is easy to observe, that by the Sermons of these two Apostles, this great Addition was made unto the Church of *Jerusalem*, seeing the 5000 Men are immediately subjoyned to the Hearing of the Word preached by them. But this is so far from making but one single Congregation in the Church of *Jerusalem*, that it, in the strongest Terms, oversets it, and makes two distinct Assemblies to have been in this Place, when the 5000 were converted, unless we could imagine the two Apostles preached at one and the same Time, to the same Congregation; which would be an Impeachment of them, unbecoming any sober Christian. There can be nothing more expresse, than, that they were both Preaching at the Time of their being apprehended; and this says, that each of them had an Audience, or distinct separate Congregation; and the Court where they were, gave easy Access to many more, nay, to all the Apostles, if they had been there present. Besides, this was only an occasional Meeting, brought about by the performing of the Miracle on the lame Man; and there is no Account of the other Ten Apostles being in the Temple at that Time; and therefore we shall not only have Two Congregations in *Solomon's Porch*, but have the strongest Ground to believe there were many more in the City, or some where else, under the Ministry of the rest of our Lord's immediate Ambassadors. And, from the whole, there is no Argument from the Apostle's daily going up to the Temple, or even *Solomon's Porch*, that can be probative, so as to make the Church of *Jerusalem* one single Congregation, unless it shall be made good,

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that while they were there, one of them only preached to the whole Multitude at a Time, and that they were not divided into distinct Bodies, for the performing Religious Worship, for which they had the best and fairest Opportunities in that large and glorious Building. Had my *Author* duly considered these Things, he would have been ashamed of his positive Charges, and more sparing in telling others, they flatly contradicted the *Testimony of the Holy Ghost*. I perswade my self, that others have as tender a Regard to the Testimony of the Divine Spirit, and consult his Honour, in giving Credit to his Word, as my *Author* can pretend unto, on solid Grounds. True Christian Charity becometh not itself unseemly, is not easily provoked, thinketh no Evil, and so keeps a Man from acting contrary to a Gospel Temper, and true Christian Spirit.

Our *Author's* last Scripture Argument is taken from *Acts* 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. And in those Days, when the Number of the Disciples was multiplied, there arose a Murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews. Then the Twelve called the Multitude of the Disciples unto them, and said, It is not meet that we should leave the Word of God, and serve Tables. Therefore, Brethren, look ye out among you seven Men of honest Report, whom we may appoint over this Business. And the Saying pleased the whole Multitude: And they chose Stephen, &c. whom they set before the Apostles. But what is there in all this to prove, that the Church of Jerusalem was one single Congregation, meeting in one Place, for ordinary, to perform the several Parts of Publick Worship? But more particularly, 1. Does our *Author* imagine, that the Multitude, or whole Multitude, is to be understood of all and every one of the Members of

of the Church of *Jerusalem*, Man and Woman? Without this, there was not a Convention of the whole Church, in order to make Choice of the Deacons. And the Scripture it self, which is the surest Guide to the right understanding of the Phrases and Expressions that are made use of in the Bible, lets us see in other Places, that all that is here meant, is a great Multitude. Thus, *Luke* 8. 37. it is said, τὰν τὸ πλῆθος, *The whole Multitude of the Country of the Gadarenes, round about, besought him to depart from them.* Will our Author say, that Man, Women and Children, every individual Person in that whole Country came forth, and besought Christ to depart? Or, does it not only denote a great Multitude, or all them that were present, who made up a Multitude? In this last Sense the Word is to be understood, *Luke* 1. 10. *And the whole Multitude of the People were praying without, at the Time Zacharias was offering Incense.* I believe it will be hard to make it appear, that all the People in *Jerusalem* were without praying at that Time. And so, if the whole Multitude, in the Texts before mentioned, are to be understood only of a great Multitude, or the Multitude of such as were present; wherefore may it not as well be understood in this Sense, with respect to the Multitude of the Disciples?

Our Author refers to Mr. *Lauder*, on his Margin; but sure I am, he hath not one Word in the Page he directs us to, which can support his Cause, or make the Church of *Jerusalem* one single Congregation. He is not there speaking of the Apostolical Churches; or any where, in his Book, does he treat of their Constitution, as established by the Apostles, but of the Form they were in, in after Ages. And if my Author is to embrace all

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his Principles, and receive the Model of the *New Testament Church*, from the Practices of the Third and Fourth Centuries; then he must have only One Bishop in One Church, and so many preaching Elders under him; but how this will stand with the Apostolical Constitution, I could never yet see. For, in the Churches planted by the Apostles, there were still a Plurality of Rulers or Church Pastors, to whom the Charge of the whole Flock was committed, and in which they had all equal Power and Authority, without the least Hint of a Bishop's being set over them. And the justly admir'd Mr. *King*, to whom he directs us, Pag. 17. hath much the same Notion with Mr. *Lauder*, and makes but one Bishop in a Church, and under him so many Catechists. But I desire, that my Author, who pretends so great a Regard to the Apostolical Pattern, would be pleased to reconcile *what* these Learned Gentlemen deliver, as being the Model of the Church of Christ, during the 2d, 3d and 4th Centuries, *with* a Plurality of Pastors having equal Power and Authority in the several Churches planted by the Apostles. According to the Stile of the *New Testament*, a Church and Bishops are Correlates, and not Bishop and Church, as is owned by the learned *King*, and will afterwards appear. Besides, if my Author allow of Mr. *Lauder's* Notion in the Election of Ministers or Deacons, it is plain to a Demonstration, that the whole Multitude mentioned *Acts 6.* were not all the Members of the Church of *Jerusalem*, seeing he expressly excludes all Women from having any Concern therein, Page 376. And so, if these be excluded, we have no Evidence of all the Members of the first Mother Church's being assembled together in one Congregation. And indeed, if the whole Multi-
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tude be taken, inclusive of all the Members of the Church, and each of them gave their Suffrage; as this would have made Way for Females to speak in the Church, contrary to the Apostolical Rule, so those of younger Years were called to determine in the Qualification of Persons for bearing a Sacred Office, and act a Part which they were not capable of.

2. It is to be observed, that it is only said, *The Apostles called the Multitude of the Disciples unto them*, not the whole of that great Multitude which, at that Time believed. For, as it is, τὸ πλῆθος τῶν μαθητῶν, *the Multitude of the Disciples*, in the masculine Gender, which may here seem to point forth, that it was an Assembly of Men, and not of Women; so, the Account on which they were brought together, was not for the Exercise of any Acts of Discipline, Jurisdiction, or performing the several Parts of Religious Worship. For tho' they were to make a Choice of Persons for serving of Tables; yet it was by the Appointment of the Apostles, who not only determined the Number of the Men to be elected, pointed forth their Character and Qualifications, but reserved the Ordination or Constitution of them to themselves; all which were Jurisdictional Acts, in which the People had no share. And so, this Scripture hath not the least *Innuendo* in it, nor is it the Scope thereof, to evidence that the Church of *Jerusalem* was one Congregation, for ordinary, meeting together for Publick Worship, or the Exercise of Jurisdiction and Government, but in so far as it was to be performed by the Apostles, who acted the Part of Presbyters in that Sacred Society. For I suppose, that in the Cities of *Inverness*, *Aberdeen*, or *Dundee*, in each of which, there

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there are two Congregations, at least, all the Christians of Judgment and Discerning should meet together for to nominate so many of their Number to be set apart to the Office of Elders or Deacons in their common Session; will this say there is nothing but One Congregation in these Burghs, which, for ordinary, meets in one Place every Lord's Day, and is under the Instruction of One Pastor at a Time? This Way of Reasoning, from the Sacred Oracles, cannot miss to be surprizing to every judicious and unprejudiced Christian. There are now Eight or Nine Congregational Sessions in the City of *Edinburgh*; and all of them assemble in one General Meeting in calling a Minister to that Place; will it therefore follow thence, that there is but one Congregational Eldership in that Metropolis? And yet this is, equally, as conclusive as my Author's Argument from the Multitude of Disciples meeting at *Jerusalem*, for making Choice of the Deacons, to infer there was but one single Congregation in the Church of *Jerusalem*. And it must be observed, that when it is afterwards said, *And the saying pleased the Whole Multitude*, this must be restricted to the Multitude of Disciples mentioned in the preceding Verse, and cannot extend one Degree further. For the Multitude called to the Twelve, were the Persons to whom they gave Commission, in order to make the Election; and therefore, when it is subjoyned, that their Deliverance pleased the *whole Multitude*, it cannot, in common Sense, be understood of any other Multitude, than what was Called and Conveened. So there is no *Emphasis* in this Expression, to make any unprejudiced Mind think, that all the Members of the Church

Church of *Jerusalem* were then Conveened before the Apostles.

3. I must freely own, I see nothing in all these Verses, to make one certainly conclude, That the Multitude of Disciples spoken of did all assemble together, in one individual Place of Meeting. For it is only said, *the Twelve called the Multitude of the Disciples unto them.* Now, it is neither said the Twelve were in one Place together, nor the Disciples. So, this Expression might be easily true, tho' both the Twelve had been in a separate Place from one another, and the Multitude divided among them. If it should be said, the Sixteen Ministers of *Edinburgh* called the Multitude of Christians to them, to make Choice of some Deacons; would not this be a certain Truth, tho' both Ministers and People were divided among the several Churches in that City? And so, my Author's Argument, from this Place of Scripture, can prove nothing for his Purpose, unless there were something in the Context, that could clearly demonstrate both the Apostles and Disciples being in one Place. And, upon Supposition, that all the Disciples in the Church of *Jerusalem* were assembled to make Election of the Seven Deacons, I judge it much more probable they met separately, than in one individual Body. 'Tis indeed true, That the Action of Ordination, or the Imposition of the Apostles Hands, when they set the Deacons apart to their Office, says of Necessity, they were together, in one Place, at that Time; but there is nothing in the Action of Election, but what could be performed in separate Places and Assemblies, as well as in one. Nor will it, in the least, militate against what is said, that we have no Account of the Apostles coming together
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after the Election, in order to the Ordination of the Deacons. For, as it is not to be imagined, that the Choice made, was the Work of a few Minutes, if there was a Deliberation on the Qualifications of the Persons, and an Election by Way of Suffrage; so we have as little Account of the Place where the Apostles were, when they entred into the Resolution of calling the Multitude; which behoved to be agreed to, before it was intimate, where they were, when it was given forth, and how long Time it took to the concluding of the Affair. And after all, I cannot help thinking, that the Learned (a) Mr. Jameson was not much in the Wrong, when he reckoned there were *diverse grave and venerable Men chosen from among the People, to represent them; when the Apostles are said to have called the Multitude together, for choosing the Deacons.* Nay, his Assertion is agreeable to the Style of the Holy Scriptures: For what more frequent Form of Speech, and familiar Expression is there with *Moses*, than that he *called all Israel, and said unto them; spoke to all the Congregation of Israel, whatsoever the Lord commanded him; nay, even in the Ears of all the Congregation?* Now, is it imaginable, that *Moses* called Six hundred thousand Men to him, and spoke in their Ears? No: He himself gives us to frame a Notion of the Expressions, every Way suitable to what the Judicious Mr. Jameson has said. For, *Deut. 31. 28.* the Inspir'd Penman gives us to know, that all that was meant by these Forms of Speech, was, that he called the *Elders of the Tribes and the Officers*, that he might speak in their Ears, all the Words of the Song. Now, I would gladly know, if the Apostles Form of Speech, *they called*

(a) Sum of Episcop. contr.. Page 90.

led the Multitude of the Disciples to them, &c. is any stronger Argument for proving all the Christians were actually present, which were then in *Jerusalem*, than *Moses* is, for all *Israel's* being present before him, *Deut.* 5. 1. & 29. 2. & 31. 28, 30. *Exod.* 35. 1, 4. Thus, I leave it to the Consideration of every Judicious Examiner, whether there is any Thing in this and the preceeding Scripture Arguments adduced by our *Author*, to make any unprejudiced Mind think, there was but one single Congregation in the Church of *Jerusalem*. Thus far, with respect to the State of that Church, before the Persecution which arose at the Death of *Stephen*.

As for the other Scriptures proposed by my *Author*, namely, *Acts* 21. 18, 22. & 15. 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 22. they are afterwards considered. And what he says, Page 13. of the Community of Goods there was in the Church of *Jerusalem*, and that they were a *Body of People living upon a Common Stock*, is nothing to his Purpose, and can never be an Argument they were but one Congregation. It is not their having *Access to be much together, and to be well acquainted, and their not being hindered by their Ordinary Employments from close Communion in their private and publick Meetings*, that could alter the ordinary Publick Assemblies of that Church. Will this have such a Charm on the Bodies of People, as to make at least 10000 Men and Women to take up so little Bounds in a Publick Assembly, as that they may all be conveniently accommodate, easily reach'd and edified by the Voice of one Pastor at a Time? If this could be proven, it would say much, and without it, there is nothing in this Argument to our *Author's* Purpose. Besides, could their living on a Common Stock,

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or all the Converse they had together, make them equally capable to be edified in any one Language; seeing there were so many Languages and Dialects among them? Or, will this account for the long Continuance of the Apostles in that Church, and the Variety of Languages wherewith they were immediately endued, on their first publick Appearance after our Lord's Ascension? Had the Holy Ghost no Design of the Good and Edification of the Members of that Church, who had so many different Languages and Dialects, in enduing the Apostles with an universal Gift of these, in the very Beginning of their publick Ministry? If these Things had been duly weighed, my *Author* might have spared his printed Performance.

He adds, Page 14. *They had the Conveniency of the Temple, for a Meeting-place, where it was free to all Sorts and Sects of the Jews to assemble without Trouble or Molestation, &c.* But what is all this to the Purpose, unless our *Author* could make it appear, that when the Apostles and Believers in that Church, went up to the Temple, they all assembled in one Place of that glorious Building, and were all under the Ministry of one Apostle at a Time. And, till he do this, all he hath said, is but a begging of the Question. That the Temple was able to contain the many Ten Thousands that were in the Church of *Jerusalem*, at one Time, and Myriads besides, is readily granted; but will ever this say, that many Thousands of Believers, within that amazing Fabrick, made up but one single Congregation. Now, to shew the Vanity of this Way of Reasoning, let it be considered, that the south Wall of the outer Temple, from the south east Corner of *Solomon's* Porch, was 500 Cubits in Length, and had four Rows of Pillars all

all along within, the innermost fixed to the Wall itself, the second, 15 Cubits distant from it, the third, 30 Cubits distant from the second, and the fourth 15 Cubits distant from the third, besides the Space of 210 Cubits of an open Court, betwixt the outmost Row of these Pillars, and the south Wall of the inner Temple. From the south west Corner of this Wall, there was another that went parallel to *Solomon's* Porch of 500 Cubits, and joyned the north Wall, and had three Rows of Pillars, the innermost joyned to the Wall, the second 15 Cubits distant from it, and the third 15 Cubits distant from the second, besides an open Space of about 25 Cubits breadth, betwixt the uttermost Row of these Pillars and the west End of the inner Temple. From the north west Corner of this Wall, to the north east Corner of *Solomon's* Porch, there was another Wall of 500 Cubits, and had three Rows of Pillars at the same Distance one from another, as that last mentioned, besides a Space of an open Court, betwixt the uttermost Row and the north Wall of the inner Temple of 50 Cubits breadth. Thus, the East Wall, or *Solomon's* Porch, formerly describ'd, together with the other three immediately mentioned, form'd a complete Square, each of whose sides, was 500 Cubits. I have given this short Account of the outer Temple from the learned Dr. *Lightfoot*, that every one may see how childish it is, for any Person to reason, from the *Apostles* and the Believers in *Jerusalem* their going up to the Temple, in order to make them one single Congregation, unless they could prove, that during their being in that surprising Building, they were all taught and instructed by one single Pastor at a Time.

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Our Author adds---, *It cannot be shewed, there remained any more in Jerusalem, during the Persecution, than might assemble in some private Place; neither after the Heat of the Persecution was over, can it be shown, that there was any greater Multitude in the Church of Jerusalem, than such as might come together in one Place, Acts 21. 18,--- 22.* I have already made it good, that it doth not appear from the History of Stephen's Persecution, that any were dispersed from that Church, save only such as went abroad every where preaching the Gospel; that there were great Additions made to the Church of Jerusalem, after she enjoyed Peace, and that there were at least 30000 Believers there, at the Time of Paul's going up, *Acts 21. 20. Thou seest, Brother, how many Myriads, or Ten Thousands of Jews there are which believe.* It is surprising to imagine, that such a Multitude might, and behoved to come together in one Place; that is, if it hath any Sense in it, or can answer my Author's Purpose, they assembled in one Congregation for Publick Worship. Besides, it is not so much as hinted, in the Passage he quotes for a Proof, that they were to come together in one Place, it is only said, *Acts 21. 22. the Multitude must needs come together, συνελθεῖν.* The Expression seems only to have a Relation to their convening in the Temple; but will this say, their going up thither, made them one single Christian Congregation? But my Author thought this was too hot, and therefore he is obliged to make a Reserve; for *tho' James and the Elders speak to Paul of many Thousands who believed; yet they do not tell that these Thousands were in the Church of Jerusalem; for by that Time there were many other Churches of believing Jews, throughout all Judea, Acts 9. 31,*
&c.

&c. But, I would ask our *Author*, if the inspired Historian gives us the smallest Hint of their not being Members of the Church of *Jerusalem*? Or, does he insinuate, that the Members of any other Churches in *Judea* were come, or to come up, on that Occasion? Nay, I think the contrary plainly insinuate, when we have it said by *James*, *They are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews; therefore the Multitude must needs come together; for they will hear that thou art come.* Is it supposable, that the *Jews*, in the other Churches of *Judea*, should have been so suddenly apprised of *Paul's* Arrival at *Jerusalem*, that he must the very next Day go up to the Temple and purify himself? Besides, when we have several Accounts of the Increase and Multiplication of the Believers in *Jerusalem*, we have just Ground to reckon, there were *Myriads* in it by that Time. And when my *Author* insinuates, there was a Feast at this Time, it is only but a begging of the Question, till he prove it. And, I must take the Freedom to tell him, that we are not to receive his Assertions for Arguments. I have one Thing to demand of our *Author*, before I take my leave of him in this Place, namely, what Place of the Apostolical Acts it is, that warrants him to maintain, that the private Members of the Church of *Jerusalem* had the Gift of Tongues in exceeding Abundance, and that they were trained up there for spreading the Gospel throughout the World? That some in that Church had the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, and were sent forth to the Ministry, is beyond Question; but, that this prevailed universally among the Body of the Christians there, is new, and what I want a suitable Proof for. Thus far, as to the Church of *Jerusalem*.

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Here we shall subjoin a *Fifth* Argument for a Plurality of Congregations in one single Church, which consists of several Branches.

1. If several distinct Congregations cannot be allowed to make up one Church, tho' under the same Government and Rulers, then, it must unavoidably follow, that the Essence and Formal Model of a single Church consists in a mere accidental Circumstance, namely, the Place of meeting. And so, according to this, unless the *House of Peers*, and the *House of Commons*, assemble together in one Place of meeting, they cannot be denominate one Parliament. In like Manner, because, the Lord *Mayor* and *Aldermen* of the City of *London* sit in one Court by themselves, and the *Commoners* in a different Place, and distinct Assembly, therefore, they cannot make up one *Common Council*. The Reason is obvious, according to the forementioned Principle, namely, in order to constitute one Political Body, they must be assembled in one Place.

2. Besides, if several distinct Assemblies of Christians in one City or Neighbourhood cannot be constitutive of one single Church; then, far less, can several distinct Churches dispersed throughout the whole World make up one Church militant. But the inspired Apostle, *Eph. 4. 3.* without any Respect unto the Place of Meeting, describes the Unity of the Church to consist in its being the one Body of Christ, and all its Members living in the *Unity of the Spirit, and Bond of Peace*. In a Word, either that is one Church, or not; namely, where there is the same Doctrine, the same Sacraments, the same Hope, the same Faith, the same Body, the same Spirit, the same Head, the same Rulers and Government: If it be one Church, then it is
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one, tho' it may be made up of several distinct Congregations. But if it be not, then the Apostle hath not given us a true Description of the Oneness of the Church of Christ, in the forecited Chapter of the *Ephesians*.

3. Again, if to make up one Church, all its Members must meet in one Assembly, for the performing of Publick Worship; then, it must of necessity follow, that a Congregation of Christians, in any of these Cities that were driven, thro' the Violence and Rage of Persecution, into several retired Cells, for the performing of Publick Worship, and partaking of the Holy Sacrament of the Supper, did immediately constitute several distinct Churches; and so, of one, there might be made as many Churches, as there were retired Places of Meeting; sometimes more, when the Numbers of the Members of these Meetings were fewest; sometimes the Number of the Churches would be decreas'd, when their Meetings were more frequent, than which nothing can be more absurd. For, at this Rate, that which was one Flock and Ecclesiastick Society to Day, might constitute six or seven the next Day; or that very Number of Christians and Church Officers, which were united together into one Political Body, and subjected to the same Rule and Government this Week, should make up a Plurality in the next, and each of them independent on another. Why? Because the formal Essence and Nature of a single Church, consists in the Place of Meeting; or, in order to make her one, all her Members must meet in one Assembly for Publick Worship, and partaking the Holy Sacrament of the Supper.

To conclude, if in all the Cities where the Apostles planted Churches, or, in any City where

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there are more Congregations than one, there must be as many independent Churches, as there are Congregations; then, it must undeniably follow, that this would open a Door to all Disorder, and effectually establish one Altar against another, make the Person who should be ejected from one Church, betake himself to another, and thereby give Occasion to the first to contemn the latter, influence the Pastors of one Church against the Pastors of the other, and the People of one Flock against that of another. Thus, there should be an Apostolical Establishment, in which Freedom was given, for one to say, *I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ*; unless it can be made good, that the militant Church is made up of Members raised above, and not under the Influence of the Remains of Corruption, Self, and the Biass of Error: And further, that none of her Pastors can be under the Influence of Pride, vain Conceit, Self-willedness, or the Charms of Popularity, to the Contempt and Ruin of their Brethren. But, fatal Experience hath taught us, both of the Extravagancies of Professors, and the selfish Views of Ministers, under the most specious and zealous Pretensions. And, he that lays claim to such a Church Constitution, brings the greatest Contempt on the blessed Apostle's, and him that sent them, while they charge them with it: And, I leave it to the impartial to judge, how consistent it is with the Apostle's Scope, when he expressly commands, to *let all Things be done to edifying; all Things be done decently, and in Order; and declares, that God is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace, in all the Churches of the Saints, 1 Cor. 14. 26, 33, 40.*

SECT.

S E C T. VII.

The second Branch of the above Proposition, viz. That the several Congregations in one City, that assembled in different Places for publick Worship, were under the Government of one Presbytery, and thence called one Church. The Truth of this confirmed, particularly from the Constitution of the Church of Jerusalem.

THUS, I have discussed the first Branch of this Head; and come next to confirm the second, namely, that the several Congregations of the Church of *Jerusalem*, were under one *Presbyterial Government*, or *Ecclesiastical Society*, which managed and determined all Acts of Jurisdiction and Discipline relating to her; as has been already observ'd and proven: Diverse single Congregations, in any remarkable City, and particularly that of *Jerusalem*, are, in Scripture Stile, termed the Church in the singular Number. The Administration of Word and Sacraments, together with the other Parts of publick Worship, was the Privilege of every single Congregation in *Jerusalem*; it being impossible for so great a Multitude to meet in one Place, or that the great End of the Gospel could be promoted by their being in one Place, on Supposition such a capacious House had been patent to them in that City: And so, it cannot derive the Name of *Church* from this Consideration. Nor has it this Denomination from the *Oneness of Heart and Soul*, which obtain'd on her first Constitution, when they had all Things common; this being incumbent on them from the Law of Christian Charity towards one another, and

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was heightened in a peculiar Manner, from their then Circumstances and Situation, and not on the Account of their being Members of one single Church. Besides, Oneness of *Heart and Mind* in the Matters of Religion, is not the peculiar Characteristick of one single *Church*, but what is in general required of all Saints, in whatever Church they be Members; and the Singularity of its Fruits, in the present Case, when *they had all Things common*, was only accommodate to the singular Circumstances of that Church, and had not a binding Force on after Ages; and therefore, could not be the standing Foundation, wherefore any Church should be called *one* in the singular Number. The Thing itself was optional, and not given by Command, *Acts* 5. 4. Nay, that Church was newly constitute, and shut up in one City; and many of its Members were come from afar, and, on this Account, stood in need of Support; and others might the more freely communicate, they being, in a few Years thereafter, to be driven from their Possessions thro' the Violence of Persecutions. And, as the Effects or Lands of some of these, which made a publick Sale of them, were at a great Distance, *Acts* 4. 36, 37. and of little Account to them, who designed to cleave to the Apostles; so such of them as had their Possessions in *Judea*, laid their Account, in a short Time, to be cut off from them. In a Word, God, by putting this Charitable and singular Communicative Affection into their Hearts, secured the poorer Sort among them, from resiling from Christ and his Gospel, thro' the Temptation of their Poverty, and those who were rich, from being carried away by the Allurements of a present World, or, the Deceitfulness of its fading Pleasures. Again,
this

this Appellation, *the Church of Jerusalem*, &c. did not arise from any particular Paction or Agreement enter'd into, by its several Members, in order to constitute them one Political or Ecclesiastical Body, as some have alledged : For, as this Notion is without any Foundation in the Word of God, and what we have not the least Hint of, concerning the Unity of the first Christian Church ; so, it would make the Constitution of Christ's House to depend on the Will of Man, and have the same Foundation with Civil Societies. By this, the Apostolical Power of constituting Churches should be invaded, and a fixed Pattern from their Establishments at once overturned. But, of this before.

The true Notion therefore, of the Church of *Jerusalem*, and the other *Apostolical* Churches mentioned in the *New Testament*, their being called *the Church* in the singular Number, ariseth from the joint Exercise of Government, which was kept up and maintain'd by the several *Rulers* of the different Congregations that were therein. Tho' the Church of *Jerusalem* was vastly numerous, and had many distinct Meetings or Assemblies for performing the several Parts of publick Worship ; yet she still retain'd the Name of *Church*, Acts 2. 47. & 5. 11. & 8. 1. & 12. 5. & 15. 4. & 11. 22. And the Reason thereof, is, because all of these Congregations were knit or united together, in their being subjected to one Class or Presbytery of Ministers or Rulers, to whom the Power of Jurisdiction over them was committed. This View of the first Christian Church, lays before us, the true Notion and universal Genius of the Government of Christ's House, in Opposition to all the Principles of the *Independents* on that Head. And that

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which is an inviolable Confirmation of it, is, that in all the Accounts we have of the Church of *Jerusalem*, the Ecclesiastical Officers thereof are denominate the *Rulers* or *Ministers* of that *Church*, but never of any particular Congregation or Assembly constitutive of the whole Body. Thus, 'tis said in the general, *Acts* 11. 27. *In those Days came Prophets from Jerusalem*; and, Ver. 30. the Relief which was sent to the *Brethren which dwelt in Judea*, is said to be sent to the *Elders by the Hands of Barnabas and Saul*. And, *Acts* 15. 2. *Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem, unto the Apostles and Elders, about this Question*. And, *Acts* 21. 17, 18. *And when we were come to Jerusalem, the Brethren received us gladly. And the Day following, Paul went in with us to James, and all the Elders were present*. This will further be made appear afterwards, when it shall be shown, that the Officers of the Church of *Antioch* are designed in general, *Prophets and Teachers of the Church*, *Acts* 13. 1, 2, 3. & 15. 35. In like Manner, these of *Ephesus*, *Acts* 20. 27, 28. So likewise, with Respect to *Philippi*, *Corinth* and *Thessalonica*, *Philip*. 1. 1. *1 Cor.* 1. 12. & 4. 15. & 14. 29. *1 Thes.* 5. 12, 13. And, in a Word, all the Churches planted by *Paul* and *Barnabas*, *Acts* 14. 23. are, in the general, said to have *Elders ordained in every Church*. From all which we may conclude, that the Apostles, in propagating the Gospel, and establishing Churches, did, in each of them, constitute an Ecclesiastick Senate or Presbytery of Pastors, who were to act in Parity, and with equal Power and Authority, over the several Meetings and Congregations therein; on which Account they were denominate *Church* in the singular Number.

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But, to return to the Church of *Jerusalem*; we have a plain Account of the Presbyterial Managements of its Officers. The Twelve Apostles, for some Time, acted the Part of Presbyters there; and so we find them making a Distribution of the Churches Goods, according as every Man had Need, and that none might lack, *Acts* 4. 34, 35, 37. This was a plain Act of Government. For, tho' the bare receiving of Alms, or making Collection for the Wants of the Poor, is not such; yet the Determination and judicial Appointment how this Stock shall be bestowed and improved to the best Advantage, is, unquestionably, an Act of Jurisdiction. Again, we have them performing a more solemn Act of Jurisdiction in the Church, *namely*, ordaining and setting apart Church Officers, and particularly, *Deacons for serving of Tables*, or having the special Inspection of the Poor, distributing the Elements after the Consecration of them by the Minister, at the Holy Sacrament of the Supper, and the Trust or Charge of these *Love Feasts*, while they were kept up in the Church, *Acts* 6. 2, 3, 6. 'Tis true, the Apostles had an Extraordinary Character, and to this belonged the Power they had in constituting Churches, as to the Scheme and Model thereof to be observed in future Ages. They acted in their Master's Name, and were clothed with his Authority, in that Pattern and Example they gave, as to the Nature of the Government of his House, and the Officers that were to be employed therein, to the End of the World; so that after them, none have Power to add to, or alter one Pin of the Constitution which was made by them. By them it was, the Foundation of the Christian Church was laid, and any other Foundation no Man is authorised to make; and

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and in this, they were infallibly directed to act, in all Things, agreeably to the Mind of their Lord. But, tho' no Man, after the Apostles, is impowered by Christ, to introduce a new Scheme or Model of the *New Testament* Oeconomy, or differing from that which was established immediately by them; will it thence follow, that ordinary Pastors and Rulers are not authorised to follow that Pattern and Example, which the Apostles left behind them, to be a standing Rule for *Perfecting the Saints*, and *Edifying the Body of Christ*, till they all come to a perfect Man in him? By no Means. To introduce a new Religion into the World, and infallibly lay down the Gospel State of Things, or whatever was essential to make up the Oeconomy of the Redeemer's House in this lower World, was indeed peculiar to the Apostles; and no Man can succeed them herein. But then it must be observed, that in all these Acts of Religious Worship, Government and Jurisdiction, which were to be daily repeated, as Occasion did require, or on set Times, to the End of the World, for making the Body of Christ complete, and the Vindication of his Honour, the Apostles not only gave Authority to, and immediately introduced them into the Church; but, at the same Time, acted the Part of ordinary Pastors or Ministers, in giving an Example of what was to be observed and daily practised in the Church, by those who should succeed them in their ordinary Powers. Thus, the Apostles introducing the Office of Deacons into the Church, gave Authority to that Order of Officers; and this is what none of their Successors can do: But the Grounds of that Institution being lasting, and the Office still necessary in the Church, their setting them apart by the Imposition of Hands, was an Example

Example to ordinary Pastors; and this Pattern they were to follow, in setting apart others to the same Office; and in this they acted the Part of ordinary and standing Rulers. The same was their Case, with respect to their Preaching; the Administration of the Sacraments; Church Censures; and all other Jurisdictional Managements, which were to be continued in the Church till the End of Time. Their giving a Commandment for observing any Branch of Worship, or introducing any Part of the Gospel Establishment, gave it a binding Force on the Consciences of all, and carried in it an absolute Authority; but their bare doing of these Things themselves, or in Conjunction with other Pastors whom they had ordained, was no more but what belonged to every Minister or Elder, and served to give future Ages a clear View of what was to be the Practice of the Church. Thus, we find, that when they heard that *Samaria had received the Word of God*, they sent unto them *Peter and John* *. This was a clear Discovery of a Presbyterial Management, in sending of their own Members, by common Consent, to any Place where they had a Mind, for the Good of the Church. Thus, we find them assembled with ordinary Pastors and Elders, and, in an Ecclesiastical Judicatory, determining the publick Concerns of the Church, *Acts 15. 4, 6, 22. & 21. 17, 18. & 16. 4.* By what hath been said, it will clearly appear, that the Apostles acted in a double Capacity; as they were Apostles, they had an absolute Authority to introduce standing Officers into the Church, and give a Being to every Pin of the *New Testament* Constitution; and, as Pastors, they performed these Acts of Jurisdiction, and every Thing which

was

* *Acts 8. 14.*

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was to be repeated in the Preservation and Continuance of that Establishment which they had made, by such as were to build up and edify the Visible Body of Christ till the End of the World. And so it was not without Design, and our Instruction, that they are expressly designed Elders or Presbyters, 2 *John* 1. 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. Presbyters they really were, tho' not mere Presbyters; nor did their Actings, arising from their Apostolick Character, destroy or swallow up those which they performed by Virtue of their ordinary and standing Office, any more than what *David's* Actings as a *King*, interfered with his Actings as a *Prophet*; or *Melchizedek's* swaying the Sceptre as a *King*, swallowed up his Administrations as a *Priest*. These Offices were, in themselves, really distinct, and their Administrations also, tho' performed by the same Persons; and so it is in the present Case.

Thus, whether we consider the Apostles acting in the Beginning, in common among themselves, or afterwards, in Conjunction with ordinary standing Pastors and Rulers of the Church of *Jerusalem*, it gives us a clear View of the Nature and Genius of Ecclesiastical Government; and that all the publick Concerns of these Congregations were transacted in a Presbyterial or Classical Assembly. It is surprising, how some have rejected the Actings of the Apostles, in Things of a standing and continuing Nature, for the Good of the Church, as an Example to future Ages; and yet, in the mean Time, have laid Claim to their Procedure in taking in the People to make Choice of the *Deacons*. If this one be a Pattern, I would gladly know, why not all the rest? The Extravagance of such a Way of conceiving Things, at once razeth the Foundation of all *Ecclesiastical Government*, and leaves

leaves no Room for a Divine Constitution or Church Establishment. But, as the Apostles were under the immediate and infallible Influence of the Divine Spirit, in planting the first Christian Churches, and inviolably followed their Lord's Commandments, in what they did in making up the *New Testament Constitution*; so their Pattern or Actings in these Churches, which were of a standing and lasting Nature, were a Rule for the Administrations of those Pastors and Rulers that were to come after them in all future Ages. They unerringly followed Christ in what they did, and we are called to be Followers of them in all their Practices or Managements, that are of a moral and ordinary Nature, and carry in them a lasting Goodness and Advantage to the Church of Christ*.

It will readily be granted on all Hands, that it is necessary for the Church of Christ to have some one Government or another; and that Jurisdiction and Rule is of a Moral Nature to her, so that she cannot subsist without it; or, that it is a Mean of her *Perfecting* and *Building up*. Now, as the Apostles made the Will of their Lord the Rule and Measure of their Ecclesiastical Managements, and were infallibly guided by the Spirit to keep by it; so, we being required to be Followers of the Apostles, in those Things that are founded on moral Grounds, have a perpetual and common Goodness in them to all Persons, and necessary for promoting the Interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom, in one Age as well as another, to the End of Time, says, in the strongest Terms, that their Ecclesiastical Actings have in them the binding Force of a Law to us, are expressive of the Will of Christ

* 1 Cor. 4. 16, 17. James 5. 10, 11. 1 Pet. 3. 4, 5, 6 1 Cor. 11. 1. Philip 4. 9 Hebr. 13. 7. 3 John 11. 1 Thes. 1. 6. & 2. 14.

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Christ to his Church, and specify the true Genius and Nature of that Government, which he approved of to be continued in her to the End of the World. If such Patterns are not to be closely kept by, and followed in the Church of Christ at all Times, to what End were they given? And wherefore did God commend the *Thessalonians* for being Imitators of the Redeemer's Example, and that of his Apostles, if they had not the binding Force of a Precept, and pointed forth that it was their Duty so to do? Nay, was it not the Duty of that Church to be Imitators of the Churches of *Judea*, when they suffered * *the like Things of their own Countrymen*, which the *Jews* had done of theirs? Or, does not God's Approbation of them, in these Things, include that it was his Will they should have followed such Examples? Moreover, what was the great Design of our Blessed Lord's washing the Feet of his Disciples, if it was not to give us the most lively Example of true Humility, and point forth to his Disciples, and all his Followers, in future Ages, these Duties of Love and Condescension that they were bound to use one towards another? This is the Application he himself makes of it, *John* 13. 13, 14, 15.

Besides, what was the great Design of God in writing the History of the *Acts* of the Apostles, but that the Apostolical Actings in these Churches, that were planted by them, might be a standing Rule and Measure, by which future Ages were to regulate themselves in the House of God? For, tho' that Sacred Book contains in it many Things that are doctrinal; yet, considering, that its main Scope is, to give the Church of God a View of the Actings of the Apostles, as a Pattern to after
Ages,

* 1 *Thess.* 2. 14.

Ages, it is not designed the Book of Doctrines, but the *Acts of the Apostles*. And, indeed, *Luke* the inspired Penman of that History makes such a remarkable Transition from the Gospel he had written on the Life, Sufferings, Death and Resurrection of our Lord, to the *Acts*, that he gives the clearest Intimation of the Necessity and Usefulness thereof in the Church, to make up a complete Pattern, and lasting Example of the Rule and Government of the Redeemer's Kingdom. And what serves to give a further Discovery of this, is, that in the very Entry of the *Acts*, it is said, *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his Passion, by many infallible Proofs, being seen of them forty Days, and speaking of the Things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.* From this, it is evident, that our Lord gave *Commandments to his Apostles*, and during the forty Days he was with them, he spoke of the *Things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*. On which Words, the Learned and Famous *Calvin* observes, that our Lord did not depart out of this World, without signifying his Care and Concern for us; *for by this Doctrine, he shews, he had constituted a perpetual Government in his Church.* So, we are to look on the after Actings of his Apostles, to be in Consequence of his Commands and Instructions, and that every Thing that they did, in planting and governing Churches, was agreeable thereto; and that Christ designed their Acts, in the first making up the Constitution of his Kingdom, or Polity of his Church, to be an Example or Pattern to future Ages. And, that this has the Force of a Command on us, is undeniable. For, to what End was that Sacred History of their Actings committed to writing, if it was not for our Imitation? This was the great Design, the Holy

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Holy Ghost had in Eye, 1 *Cor.* 10. 11. Now, if they were recorded for that Purpose, they must have the Obligation of a Law; for otherwise, of what Profit were they unto the Church? Shall we conceive, they were of no other Use, than other Historical Writings, which only tell us Matter of Fact, and afford us Ground of Speculation? In a Word, Our Lord's Command to his Apostles, about the Polity of his Kingdom, reach'd not only to them, but to us to follow their Example; and so, what he said unto them, was virtually said unto all their Successors. Thus, his Command to his Apostles, to *teach and baptize, remit and retain Sins, feed his Sheep*, and teaching the People to *observe all his Injunctions*, reached not only to their Persons, but to all that should succeed them in their ordinary Powers. See *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. *John* 20. 21, 23. & 21. 15, 16, 17.

To conclude, if the Practice of the Apostles shall be rejected, as being a Plat-form and Model of Church Government, how shall we be able to justify a Variety of other Religious Managements, and most universally received in all the Churches of the Reformation, which have their Foundation either chiefly, or only on Apostolical Practice? Of this Nature, is the partaking the Sacrament of the Supper on the Lord's Day, *Acts* 20. 7. the Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism to Infants, from the Practice of the *Jewish* Church, they being federally Holy now, as well as then, *Gen.* 17. *Rom.* 11. 16. 1 *Cor.* 11. 14. *Col.* 2. 11, 12. Of the same Kind is the observing the first Day of the Week for the Christian Sabbath, *Acts* 27. 1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2. Nay, without an Eye to the Apostolical Practice, how come Women to be baptized, seeing, only Men were circumcised under

der the Law? *Acts* 8. 12. & 16. 15. *Gal.* 3. 28. From the whole, we conclude, that according to the Model of the first Christian Church at *Jerusalem*, many Congregations were subject to one common Judicatory or Presbytery, and thus, being one united Society, it was called *the Church* in the singular Number.

S E C T. VIII.

That, there is a Foundation in the Sacred Oracles, for Provincial and National Synods, and the Subordination of Ecclesiastical Judicatories, and that each single Congregation is not possessed of an independent Power. The Case stated. The Subordination of Judicatories proved, from the Unity of the Visible Church; from Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17. from the Constitution of the Jewish Church, and from the Synod at Jerusalem, Acts 15. These Arguments vindicated against the Defender of Mr. Glas's Proposition.

AS there is a clear Foundation in the Sacred Oracles for a Class or Presbytery, for the Exercise of Jurisdiction and Discipline over several Congregations; so, no less, for several single Churches to meet in one Judicatory, whether it be *Oecumenical*, *National*, or *Provincial*. It must be observed, that there is no substantial or specifick Difference between a Presbytery and Provincial Synod, &c. the Nature of their Power being materially the same; only, the latter is more extensive and numerous than the former, the first being made up of the Rulers of several Congregations, and the latter of these, of several particu-

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lar Churches; on which Account, their Authority must be proportionally the greater and more extensive. Now, by the same Parity of Reason, if it be allowable, for Two or Three, or more particular Churches, to meet in one Ecclesiastical Assembly, and determine the publick Concerns of the Congregations and Churches within their Bounds; then, it must naturally follow, that a *National* or *Oecumenical* Assembly is lawful on the same Grounds. These are no more specifically distinct from one another, or from a Synod, than a *Provincial Synod* is from a *Presbytery*; nor is their Power of a different Nature from them, but materially the same in all, save only, more extensive in Proportion to their Number and Extent of the Bounds of the particular Churches represented, and meeting in National or Oecumenical Assemblies. As the Rulers of a particular Church or Presbytery exercise Discipline and Jurisdiction over the several Congregations within their Bounds; so, Provincial, National or Oecumenical Assemblies over the several Churches within their Bounds. Thus, the Original Genius of Ecclesiastical Government is the same in all these Judicatories; they are made up of the same Officers, their Power is the same, as to its Nature, and all of them are regulated by the same Sacred Laws. Thus, the only Difference is, that one of these Judicatories extends itself to a larger Bounds than another, and so, they are distinguished, as the School Men speak, *numero*, but not *specie*, and are equally built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and the Prophets. From this View of Things, it is easy to perceive, that there was no Necessity for laying down precise Rules, when general ones were sufficient. The Scriptures afford us the plainest

est Representation of the essential Maxims of Ecclesiastical Government; but, to imagine, there should be precise or particular Rules, how many Congregations there should be in one Presbytery, how many Churches in one Synod, and the like, is, what the Circumstance of Human Affairs could not admit of, and would have increas'd Apostolical Precepts or Examples to an unsupportable Bulk. And therefore, the precise Number of Judicatories in any Kingdom, where Christianity is universally profess'd, when they are to be divided or subdivided, is left to be determined according to the different Circumstances of Churches and Places. This the Rulers of the Churches of Christ in any Kingdom are authorized to do, by Virtue of the Apostolical Direction, that *all Things should be done decently and in Order*, or according as they find the Exigencies and Edification of the whole Body may be best advanced; and indeed, it is simply impossible it could be otherwise. From all this, there is not the smallest Shadow of Ground, for any to alledge, that a Synod or Assembly of Ministers throughout a Nation has no Foundation from Divine Authority, and is placed on an Act merely human. All this is bottomed on the very essential Maxims and Genius of Ecclesiastical Government, warranted by Apostolical Precept, Example, and the Nature of Sacred Society: And one may, with equal Justice, infer, from a Presbytery's ordaining a Minister, that he only preaches and performs the other Branches of the Pastoral Office, by a human Authority; as that the Body of Church Rulers in any Kingdom act without Divine Warrant, when they assemble together and divide themselves in smaller Ecclesiastical Judicatories, as their Circumstances best

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allow of, and as tends most to promote the Edification, Order and Unity of the whole Sacred Body. For there is a Scripture Warrant for the one no less than for the other. And, the very Nature of the Thing plainly declares, that the Circumstances of Time, Place or the Situation of Christians in any Kingdom, must determine the Minds of Church Rulers, under the Authority of the general Apostolical Directions, as to the Number of Ecclesiastical Judicatories, fewer or more in any Kingdom. So, if it shall be made good, from Sacred Writ, that more single Churches than one are authorized to meet together, in a Synod or Provincial Assembly, all the rest must follow of Course.

But that we may distinguish Things that are not in the Controversy, from these Things in which the Main of the Dispute lyes, it must be considered, 1. That it is acknowledged, that there is a Communion of Charity to be kept up among Orthodox Churches, 2. That there may be occasional Meetings of particular Churches, in which there may be demanded Brotherly Advices or Counsels, which ought not to be rashly rejected. 3. That one particular Church hath no Power over another; but each of them stand on an equal Bottom, and have the like Jurisdiction over their own Members. 4. Nor is it alledged, that the Power of Synods is corruptive, destructive or privative of the Power committed unto any particular Church or Congregation therein; but only Perfective and Cumulative thereunto. Tho' a Synod may rectify or annul the particular Deed of a Presbytery, which may be irregular or wrong; yet they do not deprive them of the Power of Judging in Causes of the same Nature afterwards. Nor, 5. That

That either particular Churches separately, or many Churches in one Assembly, have an absolute and infallible Power to make Laws according to their own Wills, but only Ministerial, and is to be regulated by the *Law* and the *Testimony*. Hence it is, there is many Times just Occasion for Appeals from a lesser Judicatory to a greater; for, tho' none are infallible, yet *Plus vident Oculi quam Oculus*, a large Body of Men may see that which a smaller cannot. 6. It is granted there are many Things which may be determined by one single Church, without any Reference to a superior Judicatory: And therefore, tho' a single Church or Presbytery is frequently to meet, about the ordinary Affairs of the several Congregations in their Bounds; yet there is not that Need for the frequent Meetings of Synods, they being concerned in those Things that are of a more general and publick Nature, and which may have an Influence on the whole Sacred Body. 7. It is acknowledged, that a single Church may be so situate in some remote Place, and be destitute of the Means or Access to joyn with other Churches in the Management of Affairs which are of a publick Concern; and yet be a true Church, having all the Essentials of Ecclesiastical Government: The Combination of Churches is not so essential to the Being of a Church, as its well Being. 8. The Power of Synods, as well as Presbyteries, is Spiritual; they are intrusted merely with Ecclesiastical Affairs; and their Authority does not reach to Civil Causes, as such; Nor can they inflict Civil Punishments on Persons. Their Power is only to be exercised in regulating the Matters of Worship, explaining Articles of Faith, according as they are laid down in the Word of God, and vindicating them from the

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opposite Errors, Heresies and Corruptions of Men. On this Account the Church is denominate the Ground and Pillar of Truth, *1 Tim.* 3. 15. Moreover, they are impowered to determine the external Order and Polity of the Church, in those Things which are Circumstantial and Prudential; in the doing of which they are not to act by an Arbitrary Power, but must be regulated by the general Rules of the Gospel, *1 Cor.* 10. 31, 32. *Rom.* 14. 1. *1 Cor.* 14. 26, 40, &c. and the true Light of Reason. And further, to inflict Ecclesiastical Censures, in the Spirit of Meekness and Fear, on Erroneous, Heretical, Schismatical, Obstinate and Scandalous Persons, *Rom.* 16. 17. *Gal.* 2. 11, --- 15. & *1.* 8. *Titus* 1. 10, 11, 12, 13. *1 Tim.* 6. 3, --- 5. & *1 Tim.* 1. 3, 4. & 5. 19, 20. *2 John* 10. 11. *1 Cor.* 3. & 5. *Titus* 3. 10. *2 Cor.* 2. 6. *Mat.* 18. 17, &c. This much being premised, the Question in Debate returns unto this, namely, *Whether there be a Foundation in the Word of God, for several particular Churches to joyn themselves into one Ecclesiastical Judicatory, and there determine Authoritatively or Jurisdictionally in Matters of Publick Concern to the whole Body: Or, if every single Congregation is possessed of an independent Power, not only on other single Churches, but several Presbyteries assembled together in one Ecclesiastical Judicatory?* The first is what we look upon to be agreeable to the Nature of Christ's Kingdom, the Divine Command, and Apostolical Example; whereas, the latter, as it is diametrically opposite to these, so it is contrary to all the Rules of Order, and Light of Nature.

Now, for the establishing the Subordination of Ecclesiastical Judicatories, and their Jurisdictional and

and Authoritative Power, the following Considerations are offered to every Judicious Christian.

I. The very Nature of the Unity or Oneness of the Visible Body of Christ lays before us a noble Foundation for what we alledge. As has been already observed, there is, in Scripture, an Account of several particular Visible Churches planted by the Apostles, in some of the remarkable Cities of the *Roman Empire*, each of which are denominate the Church of that City; but the same Sacred Oracles account all of these particular Churches but one General and Catholick Church of Christ. In this large Sense the Church of Christ is to be understood, when our Lord says, *Upon this Rock will I build my Church*, Matth. 16. 18. And the Apostle, 1 Cor. 10. 32. *Give no Offence to the Church of God*; and, Eph. 3. 10. *Might know by the Church, the manifold Wisdom of God*. In the same enlarged View it is taken, 1 Tim. 3. 15. *The Church of the Living God, the Ground and Pillar of the Truth*. In a Word, the Church of Christ is represented to us as one single Society, united together by the strictest Ties; and all the Assemblies of Christians throughout the World are held forth as an Organical Body, having Eyes, Ears, Hands and Feet, &c. 1 Cor. 12. Now, as the whole Visible Body of Christ is one single Society, united together by the most forcible Ties; so, *that there should be no Schism in that Catholick Body, but that the Members thereof should have the same Care one for another*, was the primary Design of Christ's making a Deed of Gift, and giving unto it, *first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, Helps, Governments, &c.* The like Representation we have, Rom. 12. 4, 5. *For as we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the same Office; so we, being ma-*

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ny, are one *Body in Christ*; and every one Members one of another. Thus, all professing Christians are, in so far, Fellow-Citizens, and Members of the same Community, the *Head whereof is Christ*; from whom, the whole *Body* fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every Joynt supplyeth, according to the effectual Working in the Measure of every Part, maketh Increase of the *Body*, unto the edifying of it self in Love, Eph. 4. 15, 16. Here it is again to be observed, that the primary Design of our Lord was, That this *Body* should be perfected and edified by the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers which he gave unto it, at his Ascension to Heaven. Agreeable to this, the Apostle expresseth himself, 2 Cor. 10. 8. when he says, *Our Authority, which the Lord hath given unto us, is, for Edification, and not for Destruction.* Thus, the preserving of *Unity*, carrying on the *Edification*, and keeping this great *Body* from *Schism*, is the great End of all the Acts of Government and Jurisdiction, which the *Adorable Head* has committed to the Rulers of his Church. So this is the great Design of Admonition, in that it is for gaining of an erring Brother, Matt. 18. 15, 16. That a wavering Brother may be found in the Faith, Titus 1. 12. That Beholders may fear, and not fall into the like Sins, 1 Tim. 5. 20. That scandalous Sinners may be recovered, 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. And the whole *Body* kept from Infection, Verse 7. From this View of Things, it is evident to a Demonstration, that Church Officers, and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Government, were primarily design'd and appointed of God, for the Building up, Edifying and Ruling his Church, throughout all the Parts of the Earth. Now, this being what he had primarily in his Eye, it only belongs to particular Churches

Churches in a secondary Way, they being but as so many Branches, Parts or Members of that one Church, Body, Kingdom or Sacred Society, of which *Christ is the Head, Lord, and King*. The Inference we make from the Whole is, in the Words of the Authors of the *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici*, who made so great a Figure in the *Westminster Assembly*; "Now, there being one
" general Visible Church, having a Government
" set in it by Divine Right, and that Government
" belonging primarily to the whole Body of Christ,
" secondarily, to the Parts or Members thereof;
" must it not needs follow, that the more general-
" ly and extensively Christ's Ordinance of Church
" Government is managed, in greater or more ge-
" neral Assemblies, the more fully to Perfection,
" the End of Government, viz. the *Edification of*
" *the whole Body of Christ*, is attained? And, on
" the Contrary, the more particularly and singly
" Church Government is exercised, as in Presby-
" teries, or single Congregational Elderships, the
" more imperfect it is, and the less it attains the
" principal End. Consequently, if there be Di-
" vine Warrant for Church Government, by sin-
" gle Congregational Elderships, is it not much
" more for the Church Government by Presbyte-
" ries, and Synods, and Councils, wherein more
" complete Provision is made for the Edification
" of the General Church or Body of Christ."

Thus, according to what hath been represented from the Sacred Oracles, is there any Thing more evident, than, that the natural Genius of Christian Society, and Unity of Christ's Visible Body, required one common Ecclesiastical Judicatory, for the Government of that Sacred Commonwealth or Kingdom, in all its publick Affairs, or Things
that

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that were of general Concern, could the Circumstances of Mankind possibly have given Way unto it? And tho' the necessary Condition of Human Affairs, and Christians being placed in distinct Regions and Kingdoms, render it impracticable for them to meet ordinarily in one Council, and determine the Variety of Ecclesiastical Matters and daily Occurrences; yet still the Determination of Things that are of general Concern to the whole Body, and have a remarkable Influence on its Edification and Unity, ought to be managed by one General Synod or Assembly, in so far as it possibly can be attained. For here the Rule holds, *Quod tangit omnes, tractari debet ab omnibus*, That which concerns many particular Churches, is not to be determined merely by one, but by all those that are concerned and interested therein. From this Consideration, there is a clear Foundation for National Assemblies, and in them Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk-Sessions, as Branches or Parts of the greater Ecclesiastical Body. For, as Churches in distinct Kingdoms cannot hold frequent and ordinary Assemblies, and make up one Ecclesiastical Judicature, for the Exercise of Discipline, and other Acts of Jurisdiction; so, a General Assembly in any one large Kingdom, cannot meet on every Emergent, and take Cognizance of daily Occurrences: And thus, the Nature of the Thing renders a Subordination necessary, or a Division of the larger Body into smaller Societies, for the Administration of ordinary Affairs, and to bring Matters that may prove of more general Concern, orderly before a more numerous Council. In all this, the Reasonableness of the Thing has its Force; and, at the same Time, does exactly agree with the primary Intent of the Divine Institution of Church Govern-

Government: For, as in the Apostolical Institution of particular Churches, made up of several Congregations, there is a Provision made for the Determination of the ordinary Affairs belonging to these; so, the Original Genius of Ecclesiastical Government, which is inviolably bottomed on the Unity and Edification of the Christian Church, throughout all the Parts of the Earth, is more perfectly and nearly represented by an Assembly of Rulers, in a Province or Nation, to determine Things of a more extraordinary and general Concern, than in any lesser Class, for ordinary Occurrences. On this stable Foundation it is, that Presbytery is fixed; to which the *Independent Scheme* is diametrically opposite; and so falls short of the grand Design of Heaven, in the Institution of Ecclesiastical Government in the Church. I conclude this Argument with the Words of the Learned Mr. Hudson, in the Description he gives of a National Church, namely, *A National Union, in one Ecclesiastical Body, in the same Community of Ecclesiastical Government.*

2. A second Argument in Behalf of *Provincial or National Assemblies*, is taken from our Lord's Words, *Mat. 18. 15, 16, 17. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, ----- and if he neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican.* From the 15. Ver. to the 19. as is observed by the judicious Mr. Paget * we have an Account of Three Degrees; of Admonition, a Censure on its Contempt, and then a Confirmation thereof; in all which there was nothing new, but the same in Substance with what was formerly given unto the *Jews*

* Defen. of Chur. Gover. P. 42. &c.

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Jews, and in Use in their *Synagogues*. For as the first Degree of Admonition was private between the Person admonishing, and him who had given the Offence, whom our Lord Designs his Brother, to point forth the Affectionate Manner in which this Duty was to be performed; so the Command, and Duty resulting therefrom, in all its Circumstances, whether as to its being in Secret, or Conviction of the Person as to his Fault, and not a bare relating of it to him, they are in the strongest Terms held forth under the Law, *Lev.* 18. 17, 18. *Prov.* 11. 13, 30. and 25. 9. Again, the second Degree of Admonition before Witnesses, ver. 16. is expressly taken from the Law of *Moses*, *Deut.* 19. 15. and 17. 6. *Num.* 35. 30. and is founded on the Jewish Polity, and Moral Statutes revealed unto them. And no less is it so, with respect to the Third Degree, when the Matter was to be brought unto the *Church*: For under the *Old Testament*, those Officers in the *Synagogues*, or Ecclesiastical Rulers, who represented the Church in a superior Judicatory, were to Teach, Inform and Admonish Offenders, before they gave Sentence against them for their Obstinacy, *Deut.* 9. 10, 11. 2 *Chron.* 19. 10. *Psal.* 122. 4, 5. Moreover, the Sentence or Censure past on the Contempt of all these Admonitions, was Excommunication, and had been in Being all along in the Jewish Church, and is exprest by cutting off, *Exod.* 12. 19. *Num.* 15. 30, 31. as it is *Gal.* 5. 12. And indeed it is from the Practice of the *Jews*, we come to have a distinct View of this Censure, and the Process made Use of in the *New Testament* by which it is expressed. For in the present Case there seems to be a plain Allusion to the first Degree of Excommunication

nication among the *Jews*, which is called in the *New Testament*, a *casting out of the Synagogue*, and denoted a Separation from all Commerce or Society, either with Men or Women, or keeping Company with them in eating or drinking; † tho' at the same Time they were allowed to be present at Divine Service, to hire others for their own Work, or to be hired by others. But if he continued Obstinate after the Space of 30 Days, which were allowed him for Repentance, he was further Excommunicate, or the former Deed solemnly published, with the Addition of a Curse. And this is supposed to be the same with *delivering over to Satan*; which was published in the Synagogue; and at the Time of the Publication of the *Curse*, Candles were lighted, and when it was ended, they were put out, as a Sign, that the Excommunicate was deprived of the Light of Heaven. Thus, in the present Case, there is not only an Allusion to the *Jews*, but a Command for avoiding such obstinate Persons, and holding them as *Heathens and Publicans*, so as to have neither Civil nor Religious Communion with them; the former being denied to the *Publicans* by the *Jews*, and both unto the *Heathens*, *Mat. 9. 11. Luke 15. 2. Acts 11. 2, 3. and 21. 28, 29.* In the last Place, the Censure is confirmed by a triple Testimony and Promise, in the 18, 19, 20. Verse, by which his Servants were encouraged inviolably to hold by this Rule prescrib'd, and might expect their Masters Countenance in the Observance thereof. But this was not any Thing New, for we have the like, *Deut. 30. and 4. 26. 1 Kings 8. 30, 31, 32. 2 Chron. 19. 6, 11.* So from the Whole, this was only a Renovation of a Rule, which had been still

† Lewis Orig. Heb. V. 1. Pag. 84.

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still in Force under the Old Testament, but had for a long Time been unobserved and neglected; the Observation whereof, being most agreeable to the Spirit of the Gospel, was now revived, and to be continued under the New Testament. And indeed, in its own Nature, it has a Moral Obligation, as many other Usages and Laws under that Dispensation. And as is observed by several learned Writers; among the many Neglects the *Jews* complained of, as Grounds of the Lord's overturning and destroying the Holy City, This is one, which is narrated in the *Gemara of Babylon* *.

From the Text thus opened up, I might prosecute a large Field of Arguments, in Favours of a Subordination of Judicatories in the Christian Church, but at present shall satisfy my self with this, namely, That if our Lord fixed a Rule in the New Testament, for removing private Offences, by a Gradation from One to Two, and then alternately to the *Church*, and by this declared that the Authority of Two or Three was greater than One, and that of the Church was greater than the Authority of Two or Three; then I infer the Subordination of one Church, to many conven'd together in one *Judicatory*, and that many Churches thus assembled have a superior Power to one single Church. The Connection between the Conclusion and Antecedent is Manifest, it being taken from the Gradation our Lord makes with respect unto private Offences, as the Way of their being removed, and from the lesser Offence to the Greater. For, if the Offence of an obstinate Brother against his Neighbour was to be carried to the Church; much more a single Church, be it *Congregational* or *Classical*, which has obstinately

* See Selden de Synedr. Li. 1. C. 9.

nately contemned the sacred Laws of Christ's House, or Two such Churches contending pertinaciously one against another, ought to be carried before a superior Ecclesiastical Judicatory. For tho' it shall be granted, that our Lord is in this Place, immediately giving Direction for the removal of the Offence given by a private Person; yet that will not say, that he has an Eye to that only. The Argument is taken from the Analogy of the Thing, and its Strength lies in this, That if Christ was concerned to maintain the Peace of private Persons, and gave a standing Rule for that End, whereby an Offence was to be carried from one proper Stage to another, till it should be Authoritatively determined; then much more would he have the Harmony and Unity of a Whole, or moe Churches maintained; and the Redeemer in the present Regulation, by making Use of the Lesser, wills us to Understand, that it was his great Design that all Offences were to be taken away, or what was destructive of true Love and Tranquillity, and that by a Gradation from an Authority or Power, which carried in it a Proportion to the Nature of the Offence, and the Body offending; if a private Person, the first Essay for its Removal was in Secret by the Person offended; and this points us to the like Conduct, in Case of the Division or Offence of one Part of a Church against another, or one Church against another, that it was to be taken away by themselves; and as in the Case of the private Offence, if the offending Party was obstinate, then he who received the Offence, was to carry the Cause before a greater Power; so it must hold with respect unto an Offence given by one Part of a Church unto another, or one Church against another

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ther, that they were to bring their Cause before a Court that was of greater Authority than either Parties, which if they were capable to terminate the Difference, it was good; but as in the Case of the former, if Matters were not bettered, they must at last have all terminate in a larger Ecclesiastical Body, whose Authority and Power was capable finally to determine according to the Merit of the Offence and Scandal. This Reasoning must be good, and the Argument of undeniable Force, unless we should suppose, our Lord had the Offence of a private Person more at Heart, than that of a whole Church, or Churches; and, that a gradual Procedure was to be used in lesser Faults, till at last they should by a superior Power be finally determined; but, that Offences of an incomparably higher Nature were not to be regarded, a Schism between the Members of one or more Churches was not so Hainous in his Sight, and that there was no Remedy as to the removal of these, nor a Power to inflict Censure on the offending Party. But I perswade my self there is not only a Parity of Reason in the present Case, but a greater Strength of Reason: And our Lord's special Care for removing Offences in his Church, was very early discovered, in the Provision he made for removing the Murmurings that happened between the *Grecians* and *Hebrews*, *Acts* 6. 1. ---- 3. And I cannot miss thinking, but this Way of Reasoning will be allowed in another; for Instance, *Lev.* 18. 10. It is said, *The nakedness of thy Son's Daughter, or of thy Daughter's Daughter, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover, for theirs is thine own nakedness*: From this we may with greater Force of Reason infer, that much less may a Man uncover the nakedness of his own Daugh-

Daughter, which, notwithstanding, is no more expressly set down, than the Offence given by the Members of one Church, or Part of the same Church, against another; but none will say, but it was intended by the Law-giver, and left to be gathered by necessary Consequence; and this is all we Plead for in the present Argument.

Nor is it any Ways evasive of our Argument, what is objected by some, *namely*, That our Lord intended that this Offence of a private Person should be finally determined in a single Church, and that this was the ultimate Judgment to be past upon it; and so, it is so far from establishing, that it overthrows the authoritative Power of Synods. For, tho' it will be easily granted, that the Redeemer required, that a private Offence should be finally decided in one single Church, when both the Persons concerned were Members therein; yet it will by no Means follow, that this was to obtain in other Cases, when a Church was divided into Factions, or the Members of one Church were in Contention with those of another, or one Church in a Schism from its neighbouring Church. For the suppressing and Removal of these grosser Scandals and Offences, the Authority of a *Synod*, and nothing less was sufficient. Besides, if the solemn Sentence of Excommunication was to be denounced against a private Person, obstinately persisting in his Offence; much more on Persons giving an Offence to, and breaking the Peace of the Church, that one Society united together by the strictest Ties. On which Account it is, that the Censures inflicted by a particular Church extend their Efficacy throughout the whole of the Christian World. And indeed, if the Words were to be restricted allendarly to a trespassing Brother against
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his Neighbour, or the exprefs Letter of the Text, it would then follow, that Excommunication was only to be paſt on the Offence and Sin of one private Perſon againſt another; but, not on the Account of a Crime of more aggravated Circumſtances, or an Offence committed againſt a whole Church. But it is to be obſerved, that our Lord's Words are not thus to be reſtricted, but extended to all Perſons or Churches where there are Schiſms and groſs Offences, becauſe the Confirmation of the Churches Censure, and the Encouragement he gives to his Servants in following this Rule, is delivered indefinitely and without Limitation, *Whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth ſhall be bound in Heaven. And whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on Earth ſhall be looſed in Heaven.* And is it to be imagined, the Bleſſed Head of the Church was ſo Sollicitous to provide a Remedy for the ſmaller and more private Sins of his Subjects, and left thoſe of a more hainous Nature, and aggravated Circumſtances; nay, ſuch as ſhould be committed againſt the whole Sacred Body of Chriſt, and prove deſtructive to the Unity, and everſive of the Peace thereof, to paſs at Liberty and without Censure? In a Word, I would know whether our Lord's Promise annexed to the Encouragement of his Church, That, *where Two or Three are gathered together in his Name, there he is in the miſt of them,* was only to that Number? Or, if it extends itſelf to his being in the miſt of a great Number, or Aſſembly of his Servants met together in his Name? As to the firſt, I perſwade my ſelf that none but ſuch as have a feveriſh Diſtemper in their Brains, will alledge it; and therefore, if the Promise made to Two or Three met together in Chriſt's Name, holds good to a Multitude of ſuch; then,
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it must be equally certain, that if the Sentence of Excommunication denounced by one Church against a Person, renders him a *Heathen* and a *Publican*; much more the same Sentence past by a Synod of Rulers, for Crimes more gross and hainous. For, it must be undeniable, that granting this Promise is Indicative of his Presence and Countenance, with a whole Body or Assembly of the Rulers of his House met in his Name, it must inviolably establish the Power and Authority of Synods; and their actings against gross Enormities and offensive Disorders. Agreeable to this, the great *Calvin*, in the 8th Chap. of his Instit. and 155th Section, says, *If it be demanded what the Authority of Synods is from the Scriptures, there is no clearer Promise Extant, than in this Sentence of Christ's, Where Two or Three are gathered together in my Name, there I am in the midst of them, Mat. 18. 20.* Thus then, a Synod made up of Officers instituted by God, that acknowledge the Divinity and adorable Perfections of the Redeemer, depend upon him for Light and Direction, call on him for that End, make his Laws the Rule and Measure of their Actions, submit to his Spirit, and in all they do, study his Honour and the Advancement of the Unity and Edification of his visible Body, is an Assembly met in his Name, and his Promise is to be in the midst of them, which is a sufficient Authority of the Constitution of this Judicatory. This is all I can gather to be imported in that Expression *Meeting in his Name, Mat. 16. 16. John 6. 69. Acts 8. 37. Mat. 18. 19. John 14. 13. Mat. 28. 20. 1 Cor. 12. 3. Rom. 8. 9. Acts 19. 5.* But of this more fully afterwards.

Nor will it in any ways hurt our Cause, what is further objected by some, namely, That by the

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Church spoken of, *Mat.* 18. 17. we are to understand the whole Congregation of the People; and not a Class or Presbytery of Rulers, seeing the contrary is manifest. For, 1. The Expression in the Original is set forth with a demonstrative Particle, τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, *the Church*, which Points to the Class or Presbytery of Elders, and by no Means to the Body of the People. Besides, that Church can only be understood, to which our Lord committed by a Deed of Gift the Power of *binding and loosing*, and this was to none but his Apostles, and their ordinary Successors, *Mat.* 16. 19. *John* 20. 21. And this Power being given to the Apostles before ever a Christian Church was planted, and in Order to the planting and governing thereof, is a demonstration, the People had no Concern therein, nor in any Time coming can, unless they are able to produce a Deed of Gift bestowing it on them by the great King of the Church; which, after all the Search I could ever make, I could never yet see. And, there can be nothing more certain, than that that Law, which provides, there shall be Officers to govern, does at the same Time clothe them with a Power for that End, and entitles them to the Exercise thereof, according to the Nature of the Society over which they are placed. Now, either Christ hath by an unalterable Institution appointed a Gospel Ministry, or we must reject the clearest Scripture Testimony. And if he has, they must have the Power of Rule and Government over his Church, independent on the People. For, as hath been already observed, all the Titles given to Church Officers in the Scripture, Bishops, Guides, Leaders, Pastors, &c. import a Title to govern the Society over which they are set. And for any to imagine, that all the Power that

that is exprest by these and such like Titles, is merely Spiritual, or Doctrinal and Declarative, is at once to overturn the Power of Discipline, which the Apostles set up in the Churches constitute by them, and plainly appears from the Passages relating to Offenders, in the Epistles indited to the *Corinthians* and *Thessalonians*. And, indeed, the formal Conception of Ruling is different from that of Teaching; and, if it were not so, what imaginable Difference were between the *Elders that Rule well*, and *those that Labour in Word and Doctrine*, 1 Tim. 5. 17.

But, 2. Our Lord, in this Place, plainly alludes unto the *Jewish Synagogue* and *Sanhedrim*, to which Matters of Controversy were at that Time referred for Decision, before whom Witnesses were examined, and who denounced Persons, on their Obstinacy, to be as *Publicans* and *Heathens*. And, as the declaring Persons to be in no better State than Publicans and Heathens was an usual Form of Excommunication (a) among the *Jews*; so, our Lord plainly alludes to the Manner of their Procedure, and the gradual Advances they made in their different Judicatories, when he recommends Christian Reconciliation, and the Removal of Offences, *Matth.* 5. 22. And certain it is, that it was not the Body of the People, that determined Matters of Controversy or Offences in the Synagogues; but only their Rulers, who were a distinct Bench of Officers from the Civil *Sanhedrin*, and were mainly concerned in the Affairs that were of a Religious Nature. After the Model of the Synagogue it was, that the Scheme of the *New Testament Church* was drawn; and according

(a) See Goodw. Moses and Aaron. L. 9. C. 1. Page 199.

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ding to the Learned *Selden* (a), the Reason wherefore there was to be 120 Inhabitants in any City, in order to the Erection of a *Sanhedrim* of 23, was, that *there might be 23 to make up the Sanhedrim, and three Orders of the 23. And besides these, the 10, who were to be employed wholly in the Affairs of the Synagogue.* And, it is plain from the *New Testament*, there was a Plurality of Rulers in every Synagogue, *Acts* 13. 15. & 18. 8, 17. *Mark* 5. 22. And considering, our Lord is immediately addressing himself to his Disciples, it is easy to perceive, that the Tendency of his Discourse was, to put them in Mind of what had been in Use among the *Jews*, and they were bound to have practised in their Synagogues, and was now to be observed in the Christian Church about to be established. Thus, the Apostles, at that Time, were impower'd, to accommodate and determine any Differences that might fall out among Christ's Followers; and it was to be a standing Rule in all Time coming, when his Church should be formally planted, that the Rulers thereof were to follow, in the Determination and Removing of Offences. Therefore it was, he gave the Apostles the Power of Binding and Loosing, and they were *the Church* which was to be informed on the falling out of Offences, and the Obstinacy of the Offender; and consequently, their ordinary Successors in the after Ages of the World, till the End of Time, were *the Church*, as the Rulers of the Synagogue, and Sanhedrin had been, and ought to have continued in the Practise of their Duty, as such, if the Divine Law had not been neglected by them. This gives us a plain and easy Notion of what our Lord meant by the

(b) *De Synedr. L. 2. C. 5. §. 4.*

the Church, and what it was he had an Allusion to in this prescribed Rule.

3. We are here to understand, that Church which had a Power to rule and govern in Wisdom and Judgment, or were capable to determine in Matters of Importance and Concern. But, this cannot agree with a whole Congregation of People, made up of Men, Women and Children. Is the whole Multitude of People in a Congregation, composed of different Sexes, Ages and Dispositions, capable to determine in Matters of Importance, and many Times intricate, and of no small Difficulty, with Judgment and solid discerning? Is not the popular Voice many Times erroneous and unsound? And yet, according to this Notion, Matters of Consequence to the Peace and Edification of the Visible Body of Christ must be submitted to the Plurality of Voices, of Men, Women and Children; the most of which, are so far from being capable to judge in the Affairs of others, that they have still need to be taught and ruled themselves; and it is impossible it can be otherwise. Besides, this Church can be none else, but that in which the Person offended has Access to defend himself and plead his own Cause; but it is not lawful for every one to speak in the Church, or deliver himself before all the Congregation of the People, 1 Cor. 14. 19, 20, 21. And what is more, we never read in all the *New Testament*, that ever the whole Body of the People were assembled together, for judging in Causes or Ecclesiastical Matters, but only for hearing the Word preached, partaking of the holy Sacrament of the Supper, joining in Prayer, and singing of Psalms, *Acts* 2. 46. 1 Cor. 11. 18, 19. In a Word, either we are here to understand the Church, as

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made up of Persons of all Sexes and Ages, or not? If we are, then Men, Women and Children, are impowered to judge in Causes, exercise Acts of Government and Authority in the Church, than which nothing can be more absurd and contrary to Revelation. If they shall be excluded, we desire it may be made evident from the Sacred Oracles, where the Men of Age, or all the Males that are come to the Years of Discerning, are called the Church, exclusive of Women and Children.

From the whole we conclude, that if our Lord gave Commandment for the Removal of private Offences, to carry them gradually from one Stage to another, till they should be finally and authoritatively determined by the Church or its Rulers; then, by a greater Force of Reason, an Offence given by the Body of one Congregation against another, or one Church against another, may be carried from one proper Stage to another, that is, from one Judicatory of the Church to a superior, from a single Church, to many such assembled in one Ecclesiastical Judicatory, till it be finally and authoritatively determined in a national Church or Council. But, least any should stumble at the Word *National Church*, and look upon it as *judaising*, as some in our Day are pleased to term it, I shall give them the Judgment of a very learned Divine to make it *Gospel*. The Author I mean, is Dr. *Stillingsfleet*, Iren. Part 2. C. 1. Page 157. "A clear Instance of such a national Constitution of a Church under the Gospel, we have in the Prophecy of the Conversion of Egypt and Assyria, in the Gospel Times, *Isa.* 19. 21, 24, 25. *We have Egypt professing the true Faith, and enjoying Gospel Ordinances, Ver.* 19. 21. which, according to Prophetick Stile, are set down

“ down under the Representation of such Things,
 “ as were then in Use among the *Jews*; by an *Al-*
 “ *tar in the Midst of the Land*, Ver. 19. The Altar
 “ noting the true Worship of God, and being in
 “ *the Midst of the Land*, the universal owning of
 “ this Worship by all the People of the Land.
 “ God owns them for a Church, Ver. 25. *Whom*
 “ *the Lord of Hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be E-*
 “ *gypt my People*. The very Name whereby *Israel*
 “ was called while it was a Church, *by Hos.* 2.
 “ 1. And when God unchurched them, it was un-
 “ der this Name, *by Hos.* 2. *Ye are not my People*. As
 “ much then, as *Israel* was a Church when God
 “ owned it for his People, so should *Egypt* be, u-
 “ pon their Conversion to the Faith of Christ,
 “ which was done upon *Mark's* preaching at *Alex-*
 “ *andria*, not long after the Death of Christ.” This
 “ much for the second Argument, and Vindication
 “ of the Words *National Church*.

3. A Third Argument for establishing a *Subor-*
dination of Judicatories in the Christian Church,
 is in Part connected with the former, and is taken
 from the moral and necessary Remedies provided
 in the *Jewish* Church, for the Determination of
 Causes, and the Redress of Injuries that might
 fall out by the Determination of the Rulers of their
Synagogues, in their separate or clastical Meetings.
 The *Jews* had their particular Synagogues in eve-
 ry City, which nearly resembled our Parish Chur-
 ches, in which there were a Plurality of Rulers,
 for the Determination of ordinary Ecclesiastical
 Causes; but in Case of their Male-administration,
 or a Person's judging himself lesed, he had Ac-
 cess to appeal to a higher Judicatory, erected at
Jerusalem, Deut. 17. 8, 9, 12. *And if there arise*
a Matter too hard for thee in Judgment, between
Blood

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Blood and Blood, between Plea and Plea, and between Stroke and Stroke, being Matter of Controversy within thy Gates; then thou shalt arise, and get thee up unto the Place which the Lord thy God shall choose. And thou shalt come unto the Priests the Levites, and to the Judge that shall be in those Days, and enquire, and they shall shew thee the Sentence of Judgment. --- And the Man that will do presumptuously, and will not bearken unto the Priest, (that standeth there to Minister before the Lord thy God) or unto the Judge; even that Man shall die, and thou shalt put away the Evil from Israel. And that Matters Ecclesiastical were to be finally determined at Jerusalem, by their proper Judicatory, and distinct from the Sanhedrim, in which Matters purely Civil were decided, is manifest from 2 Chron. 19. 8, 11. Moreover, in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and of the Priests, and of the chief of the Fathers of Israel, for the Judgments of the Lord, and for Controversies when they returned to Jerusalem. And what Cause soever shall come to you of your Brethren that dwell in your Cities, &c. And behold, Amariah the chief Priest is over you in all Matters of the Lord, and Zebadiah the Son of Ismael the Ruler of the House of Judah, for all the Kings Matters: This Distinction seems plainly to be pointed at by David, when he speaks forth the Beauties of Jerusalem, and the House of God, Psal. 122. 4, 5. Where the Tribes go up, the Tribes of the Lord, unto the Testimony of Israel, to give Thanks unto the Name of the Lord, for there are set Thrones of Judgment: The Thrones of the House of David. From the whole, it is evident, that the Synagogues under the Old Testament were not independent, but subject to a superior Ecclesiastical Judicatory at Jerusalem,

of the Christian Church. 283

Jerusalem, after the Children of *Israel* came to a fixed State, and this is all we plead.

Now, the Argument we drew from this, for a Subordination of Judicatories in the Christian Church, is not from the Identity of the Thing; but by Way of Analogy, or the like Reason for it now, that there was under the *Old Testament*. And there can be nothing more reasonable, than, that the Gospel Church should be, at least, equally complete and perfect with the *Jewish Constitution*, in all Essentials and Things necessary for the Good of Sacred Society, the preserving of Peace, and granting Redress of Grievances, that the Members thereof may, at any Time, labour under, through the Mistake of a Session or Presbytery. But if there were not a Subordination of Judicatories under the *New Testament*, it seems manifest, that the Church of Christ would be in a worse Condition as to her Polity, and those that were her Members, had not that reasonable Provision been made for the Redress of Injuries they might, at any Time, be brought under, than the Children of *Israel* had, under the Constitution which they enjoyed. And indeed there can be no Reason, why the *Jews* were thus privileged, and their Synagogues made dependent on a supreme Judicatory for Ecclesiastical Causes, and yet under the Gospel, the Contrary should obtain. Is not the Christian Church in as much Danger of erring in Judgment, as they, if not more? Is she not exposed to the Scourge of Errors and Heresies, which, through the Divine Providence, are suffered to be a Trial to her Faith? Are not the Gospel Times *perilous*, and many having the *Form of Godliness* (a), come abroad to subvert the simple, and withstand the Gospel? Are there

(a) 1 Tim. 4. 1.

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there not many *grievous Wolves* ready to (a) enter into the Church, speak perverse Things, to draw away Disciples after them? Are not the Rulers of a Congregation liable to *bite and devour one (b) another*; and ready to be turned out of the Way? May there not such Intricacies fall out, as cannot be determined and accommodate by a single Eldership? May not some Member of a Congregation be lesed by them, and cannot subject to their unjust Sentence? And, in such a Case, has he no Access to appeal from them? if not, he is left without a Remedy. If he can, where is it to be lodged, in a regular Manner, when there is no standing superior Judicatory? Nay, what shall be the Case of a Congregation and her Eldership, when they come to be divided, and Violence of Passion, Wilfulness, prevail on both Sides, and neither of them will yield to another? Is it supposeable, moral Suasion will be a Remedy in such Cases? In a Word, whatever Grounds there was for a Subordination of Judicatories under the *Jewish* Dispensation, there are no fewer under the Gospel, whatever moe. And to suppose so many Disorders, the Examples whereof daily cast up, and yet no proper Ecclesiastical Remedy provided for them, by the Adorable Head of the Church, is to say, that the Christian Polity comes far short, and is not equal for the maintaining of Peace and Unity, and preventing of Schism in the Visible Body of Christ, as that of the *Jews* was. But one may reasonably think, that whereas the Christian Church is the Kingdom of Christ, in its adult and mature State, it ought to be possessed of larger and more ample Privileges, in every Respect, than that of the *Jews*, which was only the Childish Age of the Redeemer's

(a) Acts 20, 29, 30. (b) Hebr. 12. 13.

deemer's House, *Gal.* 4. 1, 2, 3. We do not plead for being under the *Bondage of the Elements of the World*, as they were; but, that the Christian Church should not be denied of those Things they enjoyed in that State, which are of a common and perpetual Equity to Ecclesiastical Society; and the same Grounds which made the Divine Command and Institution profitable then, still subsist under the Gospel. The very Light of Nature teacheth us, that every Society in the World should have a Government in it, agreeable to its Nature, and that without it, it could not subsist; and so, it plainly directs us, that in every Male-administration of Justice by an inferior Society, or Branch of the whole Body, the Party offended should have free Access to plead his Cause before a superior Court, or a more numerous Body of the whole Society.

And tho' it be objected by some, that the *Papists* make Use of the same Scriptures for proving there should be one infallible Judge of all Controversies and Ecclesiastical Causes; will it thence follow, we are not to make Use of the same for proving Things lawful and agreeable to Scripture and Reason? The very Foundation of their Argument, and the Conclusions they draw from these Scriptures, are wholly alien from that which we plead upon, and the Inferences we make. We are well assured, that the Supereminent Dignity of the High Priest was purely Typical, and now there is no Priesthood, but what is swallowed up in Christ the Antitype. But, because the *Romanists* and others make a wrong Use of the Sacred Oracles, it does not debar others from making a lawful Use thereof.

Again, tho' some object, that the Polity of the *Jews* is now wholly abrogated, and therefore cannot

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not be imitated by us ; yet such Objectors ought, in the first Place, to prove, That what we plead for was Ceremonial and Typical, and not barely assert it. It is true indeed, that the *Jewish* Polity, in what was purely Ceremonial, and peculiar to them, as such, was abolished by the Incarnation of the *Messiah*, and his fulfilling what was designed thereby in his Death and Sufferings ; but that those Things which were of a Moral Nature, and founded on lasting Grounds of Equity and Justice, were abolished by him, is what we refuse, and desire may be prov'd.

Moreover, it is objected, that from this Argument taken from the Subordination of the Synagogues to a supreme Judicatory at *Jerusalem*, does, at once, overturn *Presbyteries* and *Provincial Synods* ; seeing it says, there ought only to be a National Tribunal, fixed in one particular City, and always in Being. To this it is answered, That this Objection goes upon a false Supposition ; our Argument, as was observ'd in the Entry, is not taken from the *Identity* of the Things, but from the Analogy : That is, as God made Provision for his Church of old, in all Things necessary in Point of Government, for terminating all Controversies that might fall out before private Judicatories ; so he must have provided the Gospel Church with Remedies of the like Nature, unless we should think, that she is left in a worse Condition than they, of old, were. The Combination of several particular Churches or Presbyteries is a Remedy for these Controversies and Disorders that fall out ; and are pleasing to God, as has been already demonstrated, and will yet further appear. Beside, If God gave unto the *Jews* a National Tribunal, it is much more easy for the Church of Christ to enjoy a Provincial

vincial Synod, by how much they are confined to a lesser Bounds, and have easier Access of Meeting together in one Assembly. In a Word, this Objection confounds Things which are and ought to be distinguished; it makes Things essential and accidental to be of equal Necessity. To have a superior Judicatory, to which a Person or Party lesed may appeal for Redress, and where joynt Measures may be enacted, for the Edification and Unity of the whole Ecclesiastical Society, is essential to the well Being of a Church; but the Meeting of that superior Assembly or Synod, in this particular City or the other, its always subsisting or not, is not essential, but accidental. All the Ends designed by it may be obtained, by its removing from one Place to another, and meeting at convenient Times and Seasons, as shall be best suited with the Conveniency of its Members. And indeed, the *Jewish Tribunal* was not always in a fixed State; but moved from Place to Place with the Ark, till the Time of Building the Temple. And, to add no more on this Argument, the particular *Schesis* of the *Jewish Polity*, as it was restricted to that People, *Deut.* 33. 4. *Gen.* 17. 7. *Levit.* 7. 36. to the Land of *Canaan*, *Deut.* 4. 14. & 6. 1. & 11. 31, 32. to a certain City and Temple, *Deut.* 12. 5, 13, 14, 26. was indeed abolished, by the Coming of the *Messiah*; and its Institution, in this particular circumstance Scheme or Model, was only for a Time, and adapted to that State of Things. Thus, in the *Fulness of Time*, that particular circumstance Polity was dissolved from the peculiar *Schesis* in which it was given unto the *Jews*; and Things in it purely typical and ceremonial were for ever abolished by Christ; but as to the Parts of that Constitution, which had, in their own Nature, standing Grounds
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of Equity and Justice to Sacred Society, were founded upon and connected with the natural and inviolable Sanctity of God, who cannot but be unto his Creatures a standing Example of Order, Unity and Justice, they are still obligatory, and demand our Obedience, when dissolved from that circumstantiate and peculiar *Schesis*, in which they stood with respect unto the *Jews*.

4. A Fourth Argument for establishing the Subordination of Judicatories, for the Government of the Visible Body of Christ, and the Maintenance of its Unity and Order, is taken from the Apostolical Example, *Acts 15*. ---- During the Days of the Apostles, and before they finally departed from *Jerusalem*, they assembled themselves, together with the Elders of that Church, and the Representatives sent from *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, to determine authoritatively Matters in which these Churches were interested, and of a common Concern. From this we may lawfully infer, there is a sufficient Ground, and evident Authority for the like Practice in all future Ages of the Christian Church. The Inference is what, I perswade myself, none will refuse, if the Antecedent shall be made good: For, if the Apostles, who were extraordinary and immediate Ambassadors of Christ, did, in Matters doubtful, and of publick Concern, judge it necessary to call a Synodical Assembly, and thereby give an Example to the Church; then, much more Reason have the Rulers of the Church in after Ages, whose Gifts are, in every Respect, incomparably below theirs, to convene and assemble themselves for the Determination of Matters which are of publick and common Concern to the whole Sacred Body over which they are set. And, if it had not been for going before the Church in a lively

lively Pattern, for the harmonious and joynt Management of Ecclesiastical Affairs in future Ages, there was no Need for it on this Occasion, seeing their Apostolical Authority was sufficient to determine the present Case of the false Teachers, without an Association with the Elders in *Jerusalem*, and other Church Officers that came up thither on that Occasion. If it was not to be a Pattern in after Ages, for what good Design was it left on Sacred Record, and placed among the Apostolical Practices? There was no Need to give such a full, particular and circumstantiate Account of the Procedure of that Synodical Assembly, the Nature of their Decrees, and the binding Force they had, on the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, if there had been nothing more in it than a bare occasional Meeting, without any Design of its being a standing Pattern to the Church in after ages. This much seems undeniable; and what hath been already said of Apostolical Patterns, and their obligatory Force on Persons, as a Rule, holds as well in the present Case, as in these already mentioned, to which the Reader may cast his Eye.

But, to set this whole Matter in a clear Light, we shall make the following Observations on that 15 of the *Acts* already mentioned, 1. The Occasion of this Synodical Meeting was just, and the Matters to be determined, of Weight and publick Concern to the several Churches represented in that Assembly. It is said, *Certain Men which came down from Judea, taught the Brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the Manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.* From this, it is easy to observe, that the Matters of publick Concern to these Churches, and now to be laid before the Synod at *Jerusalem*, had a Relation to the Doctrine of Justification

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fication, the Practice of the false Teachers that had come down from *Judea*, and the establishing a good Understanding between the believing *Jews* and converted *Gentiles*. This was a Matter, at that Time, of the greatest Consequence to the Peace, Order and Edification of the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, the *Jews* being generally fond of their old Ceremonies, and the converted *Gentiles* no less averse from their Rites and Customs, as appears from the Tenor of the Deliverance given by this Synod, wherein the *Gentiles* are discharged from eating Meats offered unto Idols, from Blood, and from Things strangled. Besides, the Leaven of this Doctrine begat a remarkable Disturbance and Scandal among these Churches, to the Subverting of the Souls of some, Ver. 23, 24, 39, 41. And further, it is to be observed, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* laboured with no small Disputation, to have suppressed these Disorders; convinced the false Teachers; preserved the Peace of the Churches; and saved any further Prosecution of these Matters before a superior Judicatory, Ver. 1, 2. And it is worth Notice, that the Persons immediately concern'd in this Dissension and Division raised at *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, were a certain Sect of the *Pharisees*, that believed, and had come down from *Judea*, as is evident from Ver. 1. compared with 5. Thus, they coming down from *Judea*, where the first Christian Churches were planted, gave the greater Credit to their Doctrine, especially seeing it would appear from Ver. 24. they had alledged the Authority of the Apostles for what they preached, tho' expressly disclaimed by them; to whom we gave no such Commandment. This View of the State of Things, at that Time, gives us a plain Discovery of the equal Concern the Churches of *Judea* had in those

those Matters, with these of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, so as the Determination and putting an End to them should be in one Common Assembly and Synodical Meeting. Thus, from the whole, there was a Complication of Matters to be laid before this remarkable Synod, partly Doctrinal, disorderly Practices, personal Offences, and Divisions.

2. We are to observe from this Portion of Sacred History, that there is a clear Discovery of the Members constitutive of this Synod, in order to consider the Question referred unto them, with the other Points depending thereon, *namely*, from the Presbyterial Church of *Jerusalem*, the *Apostles* and *Presbyters*, Ver. 6. From the Church of *Antioch*, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and others sent with them, by the publick Authority of that Church, Ver. 2, 12. That *Antioch* was a *Presbyterial Church*, is evident from the Multiplicity of Church Officers that were therein, and other Considerations that shall, in due Time, be made open, *Acts* 13. 1, 2, 3. Now, granting there were but two Presbyteries concerned in this Synod, as this justifies as many others to assemble together, as have Things of a publick Concern to be determined by all of them, and are called to suppress Heretical and Erroneous Doctrines; to take Notice of personal Scandals that have given open Offence; and make up Breaches and Divisions that have arisen on these Accounts; so this, in itself, was a true Synod, or Subjection of two Presbyteries to one Ecclesiastical Assembly of Church Rulers. It is an unquestionable *Axiom*, That if Two Presbyterial Churches are warranted by Apostolical Example to joyn themselves into one Judicatory, and there Authoritatively determine such Matters as are of a common Concern to all of them, and have a Tendency to preserve their

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mutual Peace and Edification; so, as many more as have Access thus to associate themselves, have the same Ground and Warrant; it being a nearer Resemblance of the universal Genius and primary Design of Ecclesiastical Government. Here is one Thing undeniable, that there was a *Judicatory* made up of the Rulers of *two* Churches or Presbyteries, to determine a Question, and other Things relative thereto, in which both were equally concern'd; and this will still justify as many more, as have the like equal Concern and Access. Nor will the great Distance that was between *Jerusalem* and *Antioch* have any Weight with it, so as to make any unprejudiced Mind to imagine, there was not one common *Judicatory* at *Jerusalem*, made up of two Churches. For, if there be any Thing in this Objection, it makes for us. For what can be more evident, than, that if two Churches, upwards of 200 Miles distant from one another, joyned in one Assembly, in order to determine Matters in which both were equally concern'd; much more such Churches as ly in a smaller Compass of Bounds, have easy Access to assemble together, and many Things that fall out, are of a common Concern to all of them, as it is at present in *North Britain*. For here, the Profession of Christianity universally prevails over all the Island; and so, the Order, Unity and Edification of the whole Professing Body requires one common *Judicatory* for the carrying on thereof, and without which it possibly could not be obtained.

After all, I'm much inclined to think, that there were Delegates from the Churches of *Syria* and *Cilicia* in the Synod of *Jerusalem*, and very probably from other Churches in *Judea*, from whence the false Teachers went. For, it is to be observ-

observed, that in Ver. 6. it is said, *And the Apostles and Elders came together to consider of this Matter*; then in the 12. *All the Multitude kept Silence*, παν τὸ πλῆθος in the 22. *The Apostles and Elders with the whole Church*; and in Ver. 23. *The Apostles, and Elders, and Brethren send greeting*. Now, I conceive, that the *whole Multitude*, the *whole Church*, are Collective Nouns, expressive of the same Persons which *Apostles, Elders of Jerusalem*, and *Brethren* are made to denote in the 23d Verse. This seems evident from the Series of this Portion of the Sacred History: For, as the *whole Multitude* is said to keep Silence; so the *whole Church* is said to agree with the *Apostles and Elders*, in sending *chosen Men of their own Company* to Antioch, out of which Number or Company, *Judas and Silas* were sent, who are called *chief Men among the Brethren*. Now, out of their own Company ἐξ αὐτῶν, I cannot miss thinking has a respect unto, and includes the *Apostles and Elders*, with the *whole Church*; otherwise I can see no Construction, or perceive the Antecedent to which **THEIR** belongs. This being granted, *Judas and Silas* were of the Number of that *Company*; and so, when the Letters are sent, they are introduced, *The Apostles, and Elders, and Brethren, send Greeting*, which *Brethren* must be a Part of the Company mentioned in the immediately preceeding Verse, and express the same Thing which the *Apostles, Elders of Jerusalem*, and *whole Church* did. This is evident from the closeness of the Connection that there is between the two Verses, *Then it pleased the Apostles, and Elders, with the whole Church. --- And wrote Letters by them after this Manner: The Apostles, Elders, and Brethren, send greeting. ---* In the Original it is yet more plain, τοῖς ἐδόξε τοῖς

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ἀποστόλοις καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις συν ὅλη τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ,
ἐκλεξαμένους ἄνδρας ἐξ αὐτῶν --- γράσαντες διὰ χειρὸς
αὐτῶν τὰδε οἱ ἀπόστολοι, καὶ οἱ πρεσβυτέροι, καὶ οἱ
ἀδελφοί ----. From this it is manifest, that the
same Persons who made the choice of some *Bre-*
thren out of *their own Company*, were these that
wrote, and are narrated in the Superscription
of the Letters, *Apostles, Elders, and Brethren*.
They made choice of Judas and Silas, *writing af-*
ter this Manner; which points forth the Continua-
tion of the Deed of the same Persons, and what
follows in the Narrative, is expressive of its Au-
thority, and the Character of those enditing the
Epistle to the *Brethren* which were of the *Gentiles*,
in *Antioch, Syria and Cilicia*. 'Tis further to be
observed, that *Judas and Silas were chief Men a-*
mong the Brethren; that is, Persons in Office, and
such as bore more than an ordinary Character, as
appears from Ver. 32, 40. *Acts* 16. 19. & 17. 4,
14, 15. & 18. 5. Now, they being Persons of
an extraordinary Character among the *Brethren*,
and chosen out of their *Company*, plainly includes,
that the *Brethren* were Persons in Office, tho' but
of an ordinary Character, and not equal to
theirs. For to be *chief Men* in Office among the
Brethren, and of their *Company* or Number, must
undeniably say, that those among whom they
were chief in Office, or superior in Character,
had themselves an Office and Character, other-
wise there were no Propriety of Speech in the
Expression.

And it may serve for the further clearing of this,
That the Word BRETHREN is frequently taken
in the *Acts* and Apostolical Epistles, to denote
Persons in Office. This is evident from *Acts* 20.
where those who are called *Elders* in Ver. 17. Bi-

shops

shops in Ver. 28. are termed *Brethren*, Ver. 32. So it is most reasonable, that these who were called *Brethren*, *Acts* 17. 6. were such as *Paul* and *Silas* had set apart for the Work of the Ministry in the Church of *Thessalonica*. In the same Sense it is to be understood, *Acts* 18. 23, 27. where there is a manifest Difference put between the *Brethren* and *Disciples*. And considering that *Paul* and *Barnabas* had established a *Presbytery* at *Lystra*, it seems certain that the *Brethren* spoken of *Acts* 16. 2. were the Members thereof, by whom it is most probable *Timothy* was ordain'd, *Acts* 14. 23. 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. In this Sense it may be taken frequently else where in the *Acts* of the Apostles, and particularly in Chap. 15. And if we compare the 3. Verse thereof with *Gal.* 2. 2, --- 7. it is plain, *Titus* was one of the *Brethren* who accompanied *Paul* and *Barnabas* to *Jerusalem*, and so was a Member of that Synod, and one of the *Multitude*. And what serves to give a further Confirmation of this is, that *Brother* or *Brethren* is usually applied, as the Characteristick of Church Officers, as distinguished from the Saints or private Believers of any Church. 2 *Cor.* 1. 1. 1 *Thes.* 3. 2. *Heb.* 13. 23. *Philem.* 1. 20. 2 *Cor.* 2. 13. & 8. 18, 22, 23. & 12. 18. & 9. 35. *Gal.* 1. 2. 1 *Cor.* 1. 1. *Phil.* 2. 25. & 1. 14. *Eph.* 6. 21. 1 *Pet.* 5. 12. 2 *Pet.* 3. 15. *Rev.* 19. 10. *Comp. Rev.* 22. 9. And indeed our Lord appropriates this Name to his Apostles, and thereby expresses that equality of Authority and Power that was among them, or that one of them was not raised above another in Office and Character, *Mat.* 23. 8. This much might be sufficient to justify our Assertion, that by the *Brethren* mentioned in the Synodical Epistle or Decrees, we are to understand Persons in Office,

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and particularly these of *Antioch*, *Syria*, and *Cilicia*, seeing all of them were troubled with this Question, and concerned to be determined in the Matters publicly transacted in the Synod at *Jerusalem*. It cannot be thought, but that the Churches of *Syria* and *Cilicia*, who were infested with these false Teachers, as well as *Antioch*, sought out for a Remedy, effectually to put a stop to the Growth of their Errors, and save themselves from being brought under an unsupportable Yoke. And tho' the Sacred Historian does not expressly mention their sending Delegates; yet, considering he expressly declares there was a Multitude of Members in that Synod, that they in *Syria* and *Cilicia* were infested with these false Teachers, and that the Synodical Epistle was formally and in direct Terms indited to them, it seems undeniably to point forth, that they were represented by some of their own Number at *Jerusalem*, no less than *Antioch*. There were Brethren in that *Cætus Synodicus* at *Jerusalem*, besides the Apostles, and Presbyters of that Church; these Partly came up with *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and when we consider that the Tenor of their Decrees runs, *The Apostles, Elders and Brethren, send Greeting to the Brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia, &c.* It says in the strongest Terms, that it had a formal binding Force on all these Churches, and that the chosen Men were to deliver it to *Syria* and *Cilicia*, no less than *Antioch*. Now, if it had a formal binding Obligation on *Syria*, and *Cilicia*, as well as the Church of *Antioch*; how was this possible in the Nature of the Thing, unless they had Representatives there, had some of their own Members amongst those that said, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, being assembled together with one Accord?* A Decree of
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the Apostles by themselves, and acting by Virtue of their Apostolical Character, had indeed an absolute binding Force on the Consciences of all the Churches throughout the whole Earth; but when it proceeded on the footing of a Synodical Assembly, wherein Apostles, Elders and Brethren sent from other Churches, acted in a joynt Course of Management, and equal Authority, it alters the Case; and their Deed could not bind formally on any Church, but such as had a Share in that Judiciary, or made up a Part thereof. The Churches of *Lystra* and *Iconium* had these Decrees given unto them for to keep, *Acts* 16. 4. but however the Nature of the Things might have a material Obligation on them, and required their Obedience; yet they did not bind these formally, as the Decrees of that Synod at *Jerusalem*, unless it shall be supposed they had Representatives there also, and that the Apostles, being universal Pastors, did, at that Time, represent all the rest of the *Gentile* Churches, and those of *Judea*, if they had none of their ordinary Pastors there; and so, according to this View, we shall have here an Oecumenick Council, instead of a Synod made up of two or three Presbyteries. This I shall not question; but still there seems to be something in the Cases of the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, and these of *Judea*, that was peculiar; the false Teachers having gone down from the latter, and the former being infested with their Doctrine, and so were required to have a more full Representation in that Synodical Assembly. Without this, there can be no solid Reason assigned, wherefore the Synodical Decrees were particularly indited, and given forth formally unto these Churches, and not unto others among the *Gentiles*. And it is to be observed, that these De-

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crees were after much Disputing, Ver. 7. And if the *Independents* shall alledge, that they were only from the Church of *Jerusalem*, then, contrary to their own Principles, one particular Church hath an Authoritative Power over another. Nor will it better their Cause, to alledge, That they were obligatory, because they proceeded from the Apostles; seeing, if they had acted by an Apostolical Authority, and immediate infallible Influences of the Spirit in that Matter, without any further View than to determine the present Question in Debate, what was the Need of assembling themselves with the Elders of that Church, and the rest that came up to *Jerusalem*? For where was there Room for disputing and determining Matters by a common Suffrage, if the Apostles had been under the immediate infallible Direction of the Spirit, and had resolved to have put an End to the present Question merely by themselves? So then, either one single Church must have an Authoritative Power over others, to bind them to Subjection and Obedience to their Decrees; or there must have been Representatives from several Churches, at *Jerusalem*, assembled together in one Ecclesiastical Judicatory, and there transacted Matters in a common and ordinary Way, to be a Pattern and Example to the Church in future Ages. And indeed, if it had not been to give a Pattern or Example to after Ages, the Authoritative and Apostolick Decree of *Paul* himself, who was an Apostle, *not of Men, neither by Men, but by Jesus Christ*, was sufficient to have put an End to, and determined the whole of this Question, at *Antioch, Syria, or Cilicia*, without making any Reference for its Determination in an open Assembly at *Jerusalem*, and transmitting Members so long a Journey to joyn with others, in
conclu-

concluding that Matter. And for any to alledge, that it was a mere Occasional Submission, without any further Intent, as it overturns Apostolical Examples from having the Force of a Law upon after Ages, and makes us degenerate into downright *Erastianism*; so it leaves no Foundation for Synodical Assemblies, whether for Advice, or Authoritative Determination in Ecclesiastick Matters; which is contrary to the profess'd Principles of the *Independents* themselves.

But, in the next Place, If any shall still alledge, that by the *Whole Church* in the 22. Verse, we are to understand the *Cætus Fidelium*, the whole Company of Believers at *Jerusalem*, I would gladly know, how it was possible for so many Myriads of Persons to meet in one Place together, in order to determine Matters by common Suffrage? Especially, if the Place of this Assembly was in a private House, as is alledged by the *London Ministers* from the *Centurist*. We have already demonstrated, that the Church of *Jerusalem* was so numerous, that it was impossible for them to meet in one Assembly or Congregation; and, that of Necessity, there were several Publick Assemblies for Religious Worship in that City, all under the Ecclesiastical Government of a Presbytery; which plainly discovers, that by *Whole Church*, we are not to understand the Body of People, or Professors in *Jerusalem*; but a Synodical Church or Multitude. This Notion of a Church, is agreeable to the *Hebrew* Name by which it is express'd in the *Old Testament*, as is already observ'd from *Psal.* 82. 1. *Lev.* 4. 13. *Exod.* 20. 18, 19. *Deut.* 5. 23. 2 *Chron.* 1. 3. And he that wants to see more of this, may consult the famous *Selden de Syned. Judeor.* L. 1. C. 9. Besides, this Gloss puts no Sense upon the Place, but what is exactly

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exactly agreeable to the Analogy of Faith, and consonant with other Scriptures; and the Antecedents and Consequents of that Chapter do fully agree with it; whereas, the *Independent* Notion involves a plain Impossibility in the Thing alledged, namely, that it was the Church made up of Myriads of Persons, all the Believers in *Jerusalem*. And so, these assembled with the Apostles and Elders did jointly exercise Authority over other Churches, expressly contrary to their own Principles. In a Word, by Church, we must either understand the Rulers and Governors sent from the respective Churches, to which the Decrees had a Reference, or the whole of the professing Christians in *Jerusalem*. The first is consonant to Scripture, Reason, and the very Nature of the Decrees concluded at this Meeting; the second is contrary to Scripture, Reason, and the Design of the Place. For, to make Women and Children to have a Voice in the Determination of Ecclesiastical Affairs, is, not only in its own Nature, opposite to common Sense, but the Apostolical Command, whereby Women are expressly discharged to speak in the Church. And to make the *Whole Church* to be only inclusive of Men of riper Years, does not come up to the Force of the Expression; seeing the Whole Church was not present; and we desire it may be made good, that ever the *Cætus Fidelium*, the Assembly of professing Christians, are called *Church*, when Women and Children are excluded? After all, I cannot help thinking, that the Body of the professing *Jews* in the first Mother Church would have proven bad Judges in the Matter of Ceremonies, so as to have given any Relief to the believing *Gentiles*, seeing they themselves were, at that Time,
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and even after, so very zealous of the Law, *Acts* 21. 20. And, by all we can learn, they continued in this Temper, and could not possibly be broken off from observing the Law with the Gospel, or intertain suitable Thoughts of the *Gentiles*, as being Heirs of the same Promises with them, till after the Destruction of the Temple. This is verified from the Testimony of after-Writers, as well as that of the Sacred Oracles. See *Euseb. L. 4. C. 6. Sulpit. Sever. Hist. Sacr. L. 2. Edit. Vorstii. Page 246.* From all which, it is evident to a Demonstration, that the Body of the believing *Jews* were not, could not, be Judges in the Question referred to the Determination of the Apostles and Elders at *Jerusalem*; and consequently, it was the Representatives of the Churches of *Antioch, Syria* and *Cilicia*, that were assembled with the Apostles, and Elders of *Jerusalem*, and very probably of others, from the rest of the Churches in *Judea*, and are there expressed by *Whole Church, Multitude, or Apostles, Elders and Brethren.*

A Third Consideration for clearing this Apostolical Example, in the Synod at *Jerusalem*, is, that as the Members thereof were Persons in Office, and convened by the like ordinary Authority; so in concluding the Matters that were laid before them, they acted in Parity, and determined the whole by the Suffrage of all the Members of that Ecclesiastical Judicatory. For, tho' there were in that Assembly, *Apostles* and *Evangelists*, whose Characters were extraordinary; yet they did not determine the Question in Debate, by their Authority as such, but as ordinary Presbyters, in Conjunction with their Brethren, both at *Jerusalem*, and those sent from other Churches. *Paul* was an *Apostle, not of Men, but by Jesus Christ*; and *Bar-nabas*

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nabas was called an Apostle, *Acts* 14. 14. and Prophet, *Acts* 13. 12. and therefore, as such, they were not subject to the Appointment of the *Antiochian Church*; But, in as much as they were sent by them, and subjected themselves to their Mission; 'tis a Demonstration they acted in that Capacity, as ordinary Presbyters, and Members of that Ecclesiastical Society. They that missionate and send, are still greater than those that are missioned and sent; which, in the present Case, could not be true, if *Paul* and *Barnabas* had not acted in the Capacity of ordinary and standing Officers. Besides, if we take a View of the Manner of the Procedure of the Apostles, and other extraordinary Officers that were in this Synod, it is manifest, they did not act by the immediate infallible Inspiration of the Divine Spirit, as when Penning the Sacred Oracles, *2 Pet.* 1. 20, 21. *2 Tim.* 3. 16, 17. but in an ordinary and Presbyterial Method, by Disputation, Examination and Reasoning on the Matter that was before them. They examined the Cause by the Scriptures, and from their being determined therefrom, they conclude, *it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us*; which is lawful for all Synods that come after them to say, their Sentence being founded upon and agreeable to the Word of Truth, as theirs was. The Rulers of several Churches, when they assemble themselves in an Ecclesiastical Assembly, and therein determine Matters that are of publick Concern, agreeable to the Law of God, it is the Voice of the Holy Ghost speaking to these Churches, and not merely the Authority of Men. And it is to be observed, that *Us* is expressive of the *Apostles, Elders* and *Brethren*; so it cannot be said, this was any peculiar Tenor of a Decree, seeing it was given

ven forth by the joynt Suffrage of the ordinary, as well as the extraordinary Officers, and is frequently made use of in the Canons of the Church in after-Ages. For, in this Synod, the *Presbyters* and *Brethren*, did, in every Branch of their Management, act conjunctly with the *Apostles* in every Branch of what was transacted. In a Word, as several Churches were equally concerned in the Question that was brought up to *Jerusalem*; so the whole Tenor of their Decrees, from the 22. to the 29. Verse, runs in the Name of the *Elders* and *Brethren*, no less than the *Apostles*; which is a clear Discovery of the joynt Authority and Equality of all the Members of that Synod, in what was there transacted.

This brings me to a *Fourth* Consideration for clearing of this Point in Debate, namely, that in this Synodical Meeting, the whole of what was before them, was carried on till a final Determination, in an exact Agreeableness to the Method used in Presbyterian Churches at this Day. An absolute Apostolical Authority was not made use of, but the State of the Question, the Circumstances of the different Parties, and Remedy against the Scandals, that were given, was deliberately enquired into, by long or much Reasoning, Ver. 7. And thereafter, the Apostle *Peter* delivered himself as to the Conversion of the *Gentiles*, and, in the strongest Terms, vindicates the Doctrine of Justification from the Corruptions of the false Teachers, and shews, that it was through the *Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and not by the Works of the Law, Ver. 7. 8, 9, 10, 11. In this he was seconded by *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who declared what *Miracles and Wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them*, Ver. 12, But then, *James*, to bring
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the whole unto a Period, not only assents to what *Peter* had delivered concerning the Gentiles ; but confirms it from Scripture, and points forth that there was nothing fallen out, but what was agreeable to the *Words of the Prophets*, and the determinate Counsel of God. He further, clearly discovers, that God, by building the *Tabernacle of David*, which was *fallen down*, was to restore the true and spiritual Worship of himself in the Nation of *Israel*, *that the Residue of Men might seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom his Name was called*, Ver. 16. 17. And so, from this he clearly infers what the Apostle *Peter* had only hinted before ; namely, that it was not agreeable to the Will of God, that the unsupportable Yoke of Ceremonies should be wreathed about the *Neck of the Disciples*, which, among the *Gentiles*, were converted unto Christ. By what was said by both, it is easy to perceive, that the Badge of *Jewish* Ceremonies was look'd upon as a Bondage, and Things that could not *make the Comers thereunto perfect* ; that there was no real Sanctity in the Things themselves ; and the Observation of them was not profitable either to *Jews* or *Gentiles* in the Matter of Justification : Therefore, the Apostle *James*, gives a Remedy against the present Scandal, which the false Teachers had raised among the *Gentiles*, by pressing their being circumcised, and Observation of the Ceremonial Law ; and at the same Time, for preventing the Stumbling of the believing *Jews*, who were yet excessively fond of their old Constitution, he declares himself for a certain Restriction to be put upon the *Gentiles*. Thus, as he was against *troubling them, which from among the Gentiles were turned unto God*, with Ceremonial Usages ; so his Sentence was, *That they should*

should abstain from Pollutions of Idols, from Fornication, and from Things strangled, and from Blood, Ver. 19, 20. This was what had not been touched at, either by *Peter*, or *Paul* and *Barnabas*, in their former Reasonings.

Now, the Consequence of all is, a decisive Determination of the whole Matter by the Suffrage of all the Members of that Synodical Meeting, which was committed to Writing, and transmitted in an Epistle to the Brethren at *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, together with *Judas* and *Silas*, whom they delegate out of their own Company, to go along with *Paul* and *Barnabas*, to witness the (a) Delivery of their Decrees, and, as from them, to deal with these Churches, in order to bring them into Peace, Unity, and Establishment in the Faith, Ver. 22. --- 30. If this be not a Plat-form of ordinary Ecclesiastical Management, and a true Pattern of the Method to be observed in future Ages, for the maintaining of Peace, Order and Truth in the Church of Christ, I cannot learn what its Design is, as a Part of Scripture Canon. What was the Need of all these different gradual Steps of Management, by reasoning, disputing, supporting what was alledged from Scripture, and, in the Event, concluding all with the common Suffrage of *Apostles*, *Elders* and *Brethren*, if this had been an Ecclesiastical Assembly wholly extraordinary, and under the immediate Influences of the Divine Spirit? And if it was not, then it must undeniably follow, that it was left on Sacred Record for our Imitation. And it is not to be imagined, that if the Apostles had designed that this Affair should have been determined solely by their own absolute Authority, and so, wholly unimitable by

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after

(a) Acts 16. 4.

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after Ages, that ever they would have followed this Method, and acted in Conjunction with other ordinary Rulers in every Step of what was done. Did ever any of the Apostles subject their Epistles to the Suffrage of any Church? Or, in what they wrote, proposed it to the Judgment and Consideration of others for their Approbation? Nay, did ever the Apostles assemble themselves together to consult, vote and transact any Part of the Sacred Oracles or Epistles, which make up the far greatest Part of the *New Testament Canon*? In a Word, their being present in this Synodical Assembly gave Authority to the Being of such a Judicatory, and their acting after the Manner in which the Matters in Dependence were transacted and determined, was to give a plain Pattern to future Ages to copy after, in the like Case of publick and common Concern to the Visible Body of Christ.

But *Fifthly*, The general Decree emitted by this Synodical Meeting, contains in it several authoritative and jurisdictional *Acts*, answerable to the principal Question laid before them, and the other Things that had arisen therefrom.

1. There is a plain Confutation of the Heresy of these false Teachers, who taught, that Circumcision, and the Observation of the Ceremonial Law, was necessary to Salvation, *Acts* 15. 2. This dogmatick Power exercised by them, is clearly and at large exprest in the 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 Verses, and included in the Body of their Decree, Ver. 24, 28, 29. By this Determination, the great and fundamental Article of Justification by the Faith of Christ, without the Works of the Law, was established; and the contrary Error of the Necessity of Circumcision and the Observation of the
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Jewish Ceremonies, to Salvation was condemned.
But,

2. In this Decree, there is a plain Censure put upon the false Teachers, in that they were branded with the ignominious Names of *Troublers of the Church with Words, Subverters of Souls, and Liars*. This much is partly exprest in the strongest Terms, and partly included in the 24 Ver. They are, in direct Terms, said to be Troublers of the Churches of *Antioch, Syria and Cilicia*; and the Synod's declaring that *no such Commandment was given unto them*, namely, for teaching their erroneous Doctrines, seems to point forth, they had alledged Apostolical Authority in their Defence, and this being openly and judicially refused, was the most severe Way of fixing upon them the contemptuous Name of Liars. This was not a bare Warning of these Churches, to be observant of such false Teachers, to withdraw from, and avoid them, as the Apostle exhorts, *Rom. 16. 17, 18. 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5*. but the Persons of the Men being specified, it clearly fixed on them a Censure and Rebuke. And considering, how zealous the Body of the believing *Jews* were, for keeping up the Observation of their ancient Ceremonies and Customs, and that it was but yet the Morning of Christianity, this Censure seems plainly to bear a Proportion to the Offence, and was agreeable to the Apostolick Rule, whereby a *Heretic, after the first and second Admonition*, was to be rejected, *Tit. 3. 10*. Their obstinate persisting in their disorderly and heretical Practices, after this Ecclesiastick Admonition and Rebuke, laid them open to the further Sentence of Excommunication; and the same Judicatory that had a Power to make this first Step of Procedure against them,

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unquestionably could have made the second, had there been Occasion. For, that Ecclesiastical Society that is possessed of a jurisdictional Power, must of Necessity be impowered with the Key of Discipline, which includes that of Censure in all the Degrees thereof, till it exhaust itself in Excommunication.

3. This Degree contains in it Regulations for removing the mutual Scandals and Offences that were between the believing *Jews* and converted *Gentiles*. The *Jews* were estranged in Heart against the *Gentiles*, for their neglecting the Ceremonial Observations, and doing of such Things as were, in all Ages, held asan Abomination among them; and, on the other Hand, the *Gentiles* were no less stumbled at the *Jews*, for restricting their Christian Liberty, and maintaining their Obligation to put on the Yoke of Bondage, which neither they themselves, nor their *Fathers* were able to bear. Now, that these mutual Offences might be removed, and scandalous Grudgings that were between them taken away, in as far as the Circumstance of Time would permit, this Synod gave forth a plain Regulation, by which the *Gentiles* were not to be pressed with Circumcision, nor the Observation of the Ceremonial Law; and yet they were carefully to *abstain from Meats offered to Idols, from Blood, and from Things strangled, and from Fornication*, Ver. 28, 29. By the *Gentiles* being freed from the first, their Offence against the *Jews* was remov'd; and by their being prohibited the latter, that which was remarkably stumbling to the *Hebrews* was taken out of the Way; the Observation of the *Noachical* Precepts being look'd upon as Sacred and Moral by the *Jews* in all Ages. This is plainly that which is called a Diatactick Power,

Power, whereby practical *Canons* are laid down, for preventing of Offences, or removing of Scandals; which is only the Province of an Ecclesiastical Judicatory, and Act of Jurisdiction. They only are impowered to put forth authoritative Rules, in Consequence of the general Apostolical Precepts, for maintaining Peace, Order and Unity in the Church of Christ.

Now, in the *last* Place, that all the Branches of this Decree, published by the Synodical Assembly at *Jerusalem*, were authoritative and jurisdictional, is manifest from the Tenor in which it runs. It is said, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to impose or lay upon you no greater or further Burden than these necessary Things*, Acts 15. 28. In the Original, it runs *μηδεὺν πλεῖον ἐπιτίθεσθαι βάρους*: Which Burden, and necessary Things being imposed on the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, says in the strongest Terms, there was a jurisdictional Power and Authority exercised over them. Thus, the same Original Word is made use of, Acts 15. 10. to express an authoritative Sentence or Decree; *Why tempt ye God, to impose a Yoke upon the Neck of the Disciples?* It would appear, there had been some in that Assembly, who design'd to have had the Burden and Yoke of Ceremonies laid upon the *Gentile* Converts, by an authoritative Decree, if it had not been withstood. Besides, when the Determination of the Synod runs, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost*, or his Mind revealed in the Scriptures, *and to us*, makes it evident, that it had the binding Force of a Decree on the Churches, and was not a bare Advice, like that which *Abigail* gave to *David*, which he might have rejected without contraveening a Law. And indeed, such an Advice could never, in any Pro-

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priety of Speech, be termed a *Burden*, or what was imposed upon Churches necessarily to be observed. Was the Pharisees imposing heavy Burdens on Mens Shoulders, *Matth.* 23. 4. only a bare declaring of Things unto them doctrinally, or giving them Advice? No. However iniquous they were in imposing Burdens on the People; yet it was still a Decree or jurisdictional Act by which they did it; and the Original Word made use of in the present Case, must have the same Force here that it had with the Pharisees, unless some good Reason can be assign'd wherefore its Sense is to be altered. The same Word is not used, when they are said to *teach for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, *Matth.* 15. 9. which evidently manifests, there is a Difference between advising, or doctrinal Declarations, and imposing or laying Things upon Persons. Every particular Minister is empowered to give Advice, and doctrinally to lay upon his Hearers the Truths of the Gospel, and his so doing binds them to Obedience, and Subjection to the Faith, not barely because what he teacheth is revealed, but on the Account of its being thus tender'd unto them: But the Power of Jurisdiction, which includes a Censure on the Disobedient, is only competent to a Presbytery of Rulers, or Synod met in *Christ's Name*, as this at *Jerusalem* was, *Matth.* 18. 20.

And, for a further Confirmation of this, the Acts that were transmitted to the Churches of *Antioch, Syria and Cilicia*, are denominate τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκρυμμένα, *the Decrees ordained by the Apostles and Elders which were at Jerusalem, Acts* 16. 4. From which we observe, 1. That the Original Word δόγμα, or δόγματα, *Decree or Decrees*, is only to be found five Times in the *New Testament*,
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and is never taken for a bare Advice, but still denotes Statutes or Laws, *Acts* 17. 7. *And these all do contrary to the Decrees of Cesar.* And *Luke* 2. 1. *And it came to pass in those Days, there went out a Decree from Cesar Augustus, that all the World should be taxed.* Again, *Col.* 2. 14. *Blotting out the Hand-writing of Ordinances, that was against us.* And *Eph.* 2. 15. *The Law of Commandments contain'd in Ordinances.* Now, is the Original Word, in any of these, to be understood of a mere Advice or moral Perswasion? And, if it be taken for authoritative Statutes in them, and this is its universally received Sense in the *New Testament*, what is there that should make us alter its Meaning in the present Case? The Import of Words is still to be taken from their ordinary and generally determined Meaning, unless there be something in the Context that may give us to understand them otherwise, which would be more than difficult to do in the present Question. For, the other Word joined with it, *κεκρίμενα*, which is render'd *ordained*, whenever it is applied to an Assembly of Persons by the 70 Interpreters, it denotes an authoritative Judgment. *Esth.* 2. 1. And so, *σύγκριμα* and *σύγκρισις*, are by them set down to signify a Decree, *Dan.* 4. 14, 21. The same Translators make use of the Original Word *δόγμα*, to signify Laws or Statutes, *Dan.* 2. 13. & 6. 8, 9. & 3. 10, 29. & 4. 3. And the other Original Word joined with it, is taken, in the *New Testament*, in the very Sense we plead for, *John* 18. 31. *Take ye him, and judge him according to your Law.* Thus, it is also taken, *Acts* 24. 6. *1 Cor.* 5. 3. *John* 12. 47. *Acts* 27. 1. *Rev.* 20. 13. *Mark* 10. 38, &c. Now, if all these Things be compared together, shall we have the smallest Remains of Hesitation or Doubt, when the Apo-

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files and Elders at *Jerusalem* say, *It seemed good unto the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay no other Burden on you, but these necessary Things*, that their Determination was an authoritative and jurisdictional Act? I perswade my self, that every serious unprejudiced Christian will, at first View, see, that these Words, and the other Expressions made use of by the inspired Historian, do point forth, that what was transacted by the Assembly at *Jerusalem*, carried in it more than a mere moral Suasion or Advice of a Sister Church, unless we shall pour Contempt on the Words of Sacred Writ, and deny them that received Signification, which they bear both there, and in other Writings. This much may suffice for the authoritative and jurisdictional Power of Synods in this Place.

2 The Persons by which these Decrees were ordained, are said to be the *Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem*. It must be observed, that, according to the Scripture Stile, the Office Bearers, whose Relation was fixed to any particular Church, were designed the Officers or Elders of that Church. So, *Rev. 2. 1, 8, 12, 18.* It is said, *The Angel of the Church of Ephesus; The Angel of the Church of Smyrna; The Angel of the Church of Pergamus; and The Angel of the Church of Thyatira.* And *Rev. 3. 1, 7, 14.* *The Angel of the Church of the Laodiceans; The Angel of the Church in Philadelphia; and, The Angel of the Church in Sardis.* And *Acts 20. 17.* the Apostle says, *The Elders of the Church.* Now, it is to be observed, that the inspired Penman alters the Stile, and says, *The Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem*; this plainly points forth, that we are not only to understand the Elders of the Church of *Jerusalem*, but the whole Assembly of Presbyters met at that Place, partly,

partly, from the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, and partly, these of *Jerusalem*, and probably, from other Churches in *Judea*. This Consideration, of itself, makes it clear, that the *Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem*, were the same with the *Apostles and Elders with the whole Church*, or *Apostles, Elders and Brethren*, *Acts 15. 22, 23*. So, by comparing the one Text with the other, the sure Guide to the right Understanding of Scripture, we may plainly learn, that those who were Members of that Assembly, were all Persons in Office. And this is the more confirmed, when it is manifest, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were, with certain others of the Church of *Antioch*, ordain'd, or by the Church * Ordinance sent to *Jerusalem*, and there reasoned, and gave their Suffrage in what was determined, as a Part of that Ecclesiastick Body, *Acts 15*. Besides, as the Apostles were not only the Apostles of the Church of *Jerusalem*; so, neither can it be concluded, that the Elders mentioned were these of that Church only; for if it were true of the first, it behoved to be no less true of the latter, which would be absurd. And, at the same Time, it is manifest, that *Judas* and *Silas* were Members of the Synod at *Jerusalem*, Men of their own Company, and chief Men, or Captains, among the Brethren; and yet were not Members of the Church of *Jerusalem*, but Prophets at *Antioch*, and sometime Members of that Church, *Acts 13. 1, 2, 3, & 15. 32, 35*. Now, what Power had the Elders of *Jerusalem* to missionate *Judas* and *Silas*, when they were not Members of that Church, but Prophets at *Antioch*, unless they had been a Part of that Synodical Meeting with the Apostles and other Brethren, who were assembled with one Accord,

* *Acts 15. 2, 3* *εραζαν*.

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cord. And, tho' the Elders of the Church of *Jerusalem* say, *Acts* 21. 25. *We have written and concluded*; here it is not to be understood exclusively of those that joyned in that Assembly, but inclusively of the whole, as is manifest from what hath been said. It is an usual Figure in Sacred Writ, that a Part is put many Times for the whole, and a *Synecdoche* here is manifest, unless we should make the inspired Penman contradict himself, which no sober Mind will alledge.

3. 'Tis said, That these Decrees ordain'd by the Apostles and Elders at *Jerusalem*, were delivered unto the Cities through which *Paul* and *Silas* went. They had a formal binding Force on the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, as Decrees of that Synod at *Jerusalem*; but as to the other Churches of the *Gentiles*, they appear to have had only a single Obligation, arising from the Reason and Equity of the Things themselves. They were, in their own Nature, suitable, founded on Scripture and sound Reason; and so, in this Respect, they were binding on the Churches to which the Apostle delivered them: But not only on this Account were they of an obligatory Nature on the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*; but also, by Reason of the Interposition of an Ecclesiastick Authority, which gave them a formal binding Force on them beyond others of the *Gentile* Churches. And that which seems most reasonable, for the Delivery of these Decrees to the other Cities or Churches among the *Gentiles*, is, that they, by this Means, might be all brought to Unity in Judgment and Affection, and Uniformity in Practice, in the Matters of Religion. This, we find, was the great Scope of the Holy Apostle, with respect unto all the Churches which he planted. Thus, his earnest Requests

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Requests and Prayers for the Church of the Romans run, *Now the God of Patience and Consolation grant you to be like minded, --- that ye may with one Mind and one Mouth glorifie God*, Rom. 15. 5, 6. The same was his Exhortation to the Corinthians, *Now I beseech you, Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same Things, and there be no Divisions or Schisms among you; but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment*, 1 Cor. 1. 10. & 13. 11. This was no less his Concern with respect to the Philippians, Phil. 1. 27. & 2. 1, 2, &c. And as it was his undisguised Scope to recommend Unity in all the Churches; so, no less, to promote Uniformity in them, 1 Cor. 7. 16. This much is sufficient for the Justification of our Assertion, as to the End of delivering the Decrees to the rest of the Churches of the Gentiles; and, at the same Time, points forth the great Design of Ecclesiastical Government, or the Combination of Churches, without which this great Scope cou'd not be reached. As Unity and Uniformity can never, in this State of Things, be truly promoted, unless there be an Union of Churches in one Ecclesiastical Government; so, without this, the Visible Body of Christ can never be in a safe and beautiful Condition. So, it is observable, what the Apostle says, *Philip. 1. 27, 28. Stand fast in one Spirit, with one Mind, striving together for the Faith of the Gospel; and in nothing terrified by your Adversaries*. It is the Unity and Uniformity of Christ's House, that makes her not only beautiful to Beholders; but terrible as an Army with Banners to all her Adversaries: Whereas, Divisions and Schisms are the Gates by which the Common Enemy of the Redeemer's Kingdom makes his Entry with triumph, and mars the glorious

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Ends the Apostle immediately subjoyns to the Delivery of the Decrees to the Cities, *namely*, the Establishment and Augmentation of the Churches. The committing of these Decrees were noble Means for promoting the Unity and Uniformity of the Visible Body of Christ; and hereby a further End was obtain'd; and *so were the Churches established in the Faith, and increased in Number daily*, Acts 16. 5.

It is but a pitiful Shift, and Sign of a desperate Cause, when some *Independents* are oblig'd to have Recourse to the Manner in which the *Synodical Decrees* were transmitted unto the Churches, and because they were sent to them in an Epistle, without any Certification, if they disobeyed them, they should be liable to Excommunication; but only, *If ye do these Things, ye shall do well*: Therefore they were not Jurisdictional. This low and mean Shift, unbecoming Men of Judgment, has been often baffled to nauseating; all that I shall add here, in Answer to it, shall be in the Words of the Learned and Judicious Mr. *Wood*, against *Lockyers*, Page 373. "That Recommendation of Obedience to the Acts of that Synod, from the Goodness and Benefit thereof, express in the Close of the Synodical Letter, doth not argue their Constitutions not to have been made and enjoined by an authoritative Power obliging under Hazard of Censure. The most authoritative Acts of any Jurisdictional Court, being sent in a respective Way, may be so recommended in such a Way. Neither that, that in the Constitutions of that Synod, there is not an express and formal Threatning of those that disobey with Censure, doth import by any Necessity of Consequence, that the Power they exercised was not authoritative, and

“ and such as might proceed to censure. Juridical
“ Courts do not always add to their Constitutions
“ exprefs and formal Comminations of Punish-
“ ment: Here, especially, it was not necessary,
“ it being a clear Case in itself, that those Here-
“ ticks and Schismatics who could, by no Means,
“ be reduced, were not to be suffered, but censu-
“ red and cast forth. ” This much is sufficient for
this frivolous Objection, which, I cannot miss
thinking, would blush in the Presence of any in-
telligent Person.

Here again, we come to meet with our *Author*,
or the Vindicator of *Mr. Glass's Proposition*. I ex-
pected he would have advanced something that was
worth Notice on this Head, but, to my Surprise,
he hath not so much as alledged one Argument
that hath the Appearance of Force in it, against
what I had formerly said. His first Reason against
the *Subordination of Judicatories*, and the Authori-
ty of their Decrees, is in Page 56. *It has not yet
been shown, nor can be, that there is any Thing more
in that Matter, than an Occasional Submission by the
Congregation at Antioch, unto the Apostles and El-
ders of the Congregation at Jerusalem, of a Question,
and Point of Doctrine, wherein they were the only fit
Persons to decide or determine. The Point nearly con-
cerned the Practice of the Gentile Disciples at Anti-
och, and throughout the World. They received the
Gospel from out of the Church at Jerusalem, and
some came thence, teaching them, that Circumcision,
and the keeping the Law of Moses, was necessary to
their Salvation, and made a Division among them.
None were so fit to determine in this Case, as the El-
dership of the Church at Jerusalem, which consisted
of Jews, and where were the Apostles. The Church
of Antioch submits it to them; but we do not hear of
any*

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any Point of Discipline submitted. The Apostles and Elders determine in it, with the Consent of the whole Church in Jerusalem: So that even until now we have not got out among Congregations, &c. 1. Now, in the first Place, what is there in all this, but so many bare Assertions, which will never have the smallest Degree of Weight with any thinking Person? And I must take the Freedom to tell my Author, that it both can, and has been shown before ever he was born, That there was more than an Occasional Submission, by the Congregation at *Antioch*, unto the Apostles and Elders of the Congregation in *Jerusalem*. And if our Author design'd to have outdone those of the *Independents* that have wrote before him, and made Profelytes from the present Establishment to his Way of thinking, he ought, in the first Place, to have canvass'd the *Presbyterian* Arguments, and satisfied the World of their Inconclusiveness, before he should have entertain'd such rais'd Thoughts of himself, as that his Assertions should be received for conclusive Arguments. Besides, it hath been already made appear, that the Church of *Jerusalem* was made up of several distinct Congregations under one Presbyterian Government; and what our Author has said to the Contrary, is there fully considered; and so, if there was a Submission made to the Church of *Jerusalem*, it was to a Presbytery, and not a single Congregation. That the Church of *Antioch* was of the same Nature and Kind with that of *Jerusalem*, has been already proven, and shall afterwards be more fully considered in the following Chapter. So that, to use his own Words, we have already got out among Congregations. 2. If it be true, what is alledged by our Author, namely, *That there was no more in that Matter, than an Occasional*

casional Submission by the Congregation at Antioch unto the Apostles and Elders of the Congregation at Jerusalem; then the Apostles were only the Apostles of that Church. Why? The Elders of that Congregation were only Elders of that Church, and here, both they and the Apostles fixed to the same Charge, namely, *Apostles and Elders of the Congregation at Jerusalem*. I always thought the Apostles, as such, had been universal Pastors of the Catholick Body of Christ, and not fixed to any particular Congregation. Again, if this Cause was submitted to the Apostles, and Elders of *Jerusalem*, and they determine therein; then, contrary to the Principles of the *Independents*, one Sister Church has a determinative Power over another, in Matters of Doctrine. But certain it is, the Elders of *Jerusalem*, or the ordinary Standing Officers of that Church, had no more Power over the Church of *Antioch*, than *Antioch* had over the Church of *Jerusalem*. The Decrees enacted by the Apostles and Elders, were Authoritative and Binding, as hath been already demonstrated, from *Acts* 15. 28. & 16. 4. And if such a Practice may take Place to the End of the World, as our Author alledgeth; then one Church may give forth authoritative Decrees to bind another Church to Obedience, without her having Members joyned with the other, as Members of the Court in which the Decrees are enacted. But,

3. There can be nothing more evident, than that *Paul and Barnabas, with certain Others* from the Church of *Antioch*, were sent to the Apostles, and Elders of *Jerusalem*, and there joyned with them in a Synodical Assembly, where the whole of what was before them, and of common Concern, was determined by the common Suffrage of the

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the *Apostles, Elders and Brethren*. For, when *Paul and Barnabas had much Dissension* with the false Teachers, who taught the Necessity of Circumcision, and the Observation of the Law of *Moses*; what was the Result? The Church of *Antioch*, ἐκκλησίαν, *Ordained that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and Elders about this Question*. It is not here said, they were the Apostles and Elders of the Church of *Jerusalem*; this is an Addition our *Author* has put to it of his own, and is without Foundation in any Part of the 15. of the *Acts*: And it may be understood of the Elders of the several Churches in *Judea*, as well as these of *Jerusalem*. But what is the obvious Meaning of this Mission of *Paul and Barnabas* and others from the Church of *Antioch*, but that when those Subverters of Souls would not listen to that Church, then they were to have Recourse unto a joynt Assembly, which bore an exact Agreeableness to the Order prescribed by Christ; namely, to refer the Cause to the Church, *Mat. 18. 17*. And that which confirms this, is, That the *Antiochian* Church was not able, of itself, to give Satisfaction to the Conviction of those disorderly Walkers, with whom they had much Dissension and Disputation; and therefore, others being concerned in this Matter, as well as they, it was a plain Duty upon them to tell the Synod or Church of the whole Matter, in Order to a Determination, and Remedy against this spreading Evil. The false Teachers are said to be *Pharisees* who believed, and came down from *Judea*, and had troubled, not only the Church of *Antioch*, but these of *Syria and Cilicia*. From this it is evident, there were a Multitude of Churches that were concerned in this Affair, and it could not

not be determined by any one single Church, but by all these interested therein. This gives us a clear View of the Necessity of the Combination of several Churches, in Order to the Determination of Matters that are of common Concern to all of them. And, if the present Matter in Debate had been only a bare Question submitted to the Church of *Jerusalem*, and not a Cause proper to be determined by a Synod, as being a Matter of common Concern to many Churches; then the Question being resolved by them, it behoved of Course to return back to the Church of *Antioch*, and there be judicially determined, as in its proper Judicatory: But so it is, that neither the Question or Cause ever returned to be decided at *Antioch*; but was finally determined by the Synodical Church, made up of *Apostles, Elders and Brethren, Acts 15, 22, 23, 24.* This says in the strongest Terms, That the whole Matter as it stood before the Church of *Antioch*, was transmitted to the Synodical Meeting at *Jerusalem*, not for a bare Advice, but judicial Determination; and so they divested themselves of a Title of Judging, and followed Christ's Rule, by betaking themselves to a Church of greater Power and Authority, for putting a final Stop to the Growth of this Heresie, and establishing a General Rule for preventing of Schisms and Scandals among these Churches, in so far as the Circumstances of their Times would allow. Thus we find there is a Practical Canon set forth, and laid on the Churches of *Antioch, Syria and Cilicia*, which is a Demonstration of the Jurisdictional Power of that Court, *Acts 15. 26, 27, 28, 29.* And it is expressly said, It pleased the *Apostles and Elders with the whole Church, to send chosen Men of their own Company to Antioch, &c.* This Church

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says our *Author*, was the *whole Church in Jerusalem*: And so according to him, there was a Convention of some Myriads of Men, Women, and Children, to give their Consent to what was transacted. But with all due Regard to him, I would gladly know by what Title they were present, whether to give their Consent or Suffrage? For, whatever Concern the Jews had in the Matter laid before the Synod, it equally, if not more Concerns the Christians in *Antioch, Syria and Cilicia*; seeing they were to give Subjection to the Decrees emitted by that Assembly. Besides, it is plainly refused, that the whole Church of *Jerusalem* could possibly meet in any one Place in that City, or be capable to hear and give their Consent in one Body. If we would speak impartially, *All the Multitude*, Ver. 12. *The whole Church*, Ver. 22. And *Elders and Brethren*, Ver. 23. Are expressive of the same Persons, and are all designed by the Name of *Elders at Jerusalem*, *Acts* 16. 4. This, from what hath been formerly said, gives us a clear View, that the *Multitude, whole Church, and Brethren*, were all comprehended in the last cited Text, under the Name of *Elders at*, and not of *Jerusalem*. And it is observable, that in the 6. Ver. it is said, That *the Apostles and Elders came together to consider of this Matter*, and these in one Body are afterwards called the *Multitude, the Apostles and Elders and whole Church, the Apostles and Elders and Brethren*: All which, when compared together, and with *Acts* 16. 4. seem plainly to point forth, that this Assembly was Numerous, and in the strongest Terms says, it consisted of Members from other Churches than that of *Jerusalem*. And indeed there is not the least Intimation in the whole Context, of the Body of the People's

ple's coming together on this Occasion. This much is sufficient, till our *Author* shall be pleased to produce what Reasons he can for the Support of his Assertions.

His *second* Advance is, Pag. 17. *Nor has it ever yet been shown, that this Meeting at Jerusalem, whatever it was, exercised any Discipline over any Church or Church Members, at that Time; they condemned the Doctrine of the false Teachers that troubled the Disciples with their Words, &c. But did they ever execute any Discipline about them? Nothing like it; they leave that intire to the Churches where they came, or where they should enter; and there was nothing of it in the Question and Case submitted to them.* Here it is observable, 1. That tho' our *Author* was very positive on the former Head, in joyning the dissenting Brethren in the Assembly at *Westminster*, who held that there was nothing more in the Matter mentioned in *Acts* 15. but a Reference of one particular Church of *Antioch* to one particular Church of *Jerusalem*; yet, on this Head he speaks more doubtfully, in the Terms of the Independents at *Aberdeen*, in calling it a Meeting at *Jerusalem*, whatever it was. But, *Dr Owen* expressly calls it a Synod, *Exer. on Heb. V. 1.*

2. Tho' it were granted that this Synod did not Exercise any Discipline over any *Church* or *Church Members*, yet it will by no Means follow, that it had not a Power to Exercise Censure. Nay, this Consequence is so far from being true, that this Synod being possessed of a Doctrinal Power, which implys that of Jurisdiction, and consequently that of Discipline, it must undeniably follow, that they might have exercised or inflicted Censures, if there had been Occasion. There may be, and there often is need to Exercise a jurisdictional

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Power, when the Judicatory has no Occasion for the immediate inflicting of Censures.

3. It is already made good, that there was a Censure inflicted on the false Teachers, tho' it did not at first Instance amount to that of Excommunication. And that there was a plain jurisdictional Power exercised, is undeniable, from the Nature of the Decrees that were agreed to in that Assembly. By these, the *Gentiles* were freed from the Ceremonial Law and Circumcision, and at the same Time bound to *Abstain from Meats offered to Idols, from Blood, from Things strangled, and from Fornication*. Now, I would gladly know, if the making and authoritative imposing of Constitutions on Churches, which of its own Nature involves the Contemnners thereof in a Censure, was not a jurisdictional Power; albeit there was no formal, processing of Persons, in Order to Censure express, nor could there reasonably be, till there was a Violation of the Canons emitted by them. That these Decrees were authoritative, has been already proven. And if there was nothing more in the Question and Case submitted to that Synod, but a mere Point of Doctrine, how could they take upon them to send forth Decrees necessarily to be observed by the Churches of *Antioch, Syria and Cilicia*? In a Word, either the Members that were Delegate to go up to *Jerusalem*, were bound to lay the whole Cause, as it stood before the Church of *Antioch*, before that Synod, and receive their Advice therein, or final and authoritative Decision of the whole thereof, or not? That it was not for Advice is evident, from the Tenor of their Deliverance, and it is expressly called *Decrees, Statutes, or Laws, Acts 16. 4*. If it was for Decision and final Determination of the whole Matter;

ter; then the Cause, in none of its Branches, was any more to be judged by the Church of *Antioch*, they having wholly given it out of their Hands, and no more intire unto them. And indeed, that the whole Cause was devolved on the Assembly of the *Apostles*, *Elders*, and *Brethren* at *Jerusalem*, is manifest, from the Censure that was inflicted on the false Teachers, the Practical Canons that were emitted, and the Determination that was given as to the Point of Doctrine. And there can be nothing more evident, than that the Commissioners sent up to *Jerusalem*, both reasoned, and gave their Suffrage in all the Branches of the Decrees that were emitted; and this gives us a plain Discovery of the Nature of that Court, and the Reason wherefore its Determinations had a binding Force on the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*.

4. I shall further add, that when our *Author* says, They condemned the Doctrine of the false Teachers that troubled the Disciples, he plainly grants this Synod had a Dogmatical Power, but not that of Jurisdiction and Censure. But, besides what was just now said, he would consider, that this Assembly at *Jerusalem* received Power of judging in this Cause, as it stood before the Church of *Antioch*, by their transmitting thereof to be judged by the joynt Power of their Commissioners, with the Apostles and Elders that convened there, as is evident from *Acts* 15. 2, 22, 23, &c. From this it is easy to perceive, that whatever Power the Church of *Antioch* had, at first, to judge in this Matter, their giving up therewith, and transmitting the whole Cause to a greater Assembly, the Matter being of Publick Concern, gave that Synod full Powers, jurisdictionally to act in the whole Affair. So, if the Church of *Antioch* had a

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jurisdictional Power, and was in Condition to have inflicted a Censure, no less Power, at least, had the Synod to which the whole Cause was given up. Besides, a Power and Authority to determine Ministerially in Matters of Doctrine, is Ecclesiastical, and belongs unto a Church, as is manifest from *Acts* 20. 29. Where the Presbytery of *Ephesus* are exhorted to take heed to Men arising among themselves, and teaching false Doctrines, whom without all Question they were to reject, after a first and second Admonition, *Tit.* 3. 10. And this is further confirmed, in that we find the Church of *Pergamos* was rebuked, and Christ threatned the Removal of her Candlestick, on account of her not exercising a jurisdictional Power over those among them, which held the Doctrines of *Balaam*, and the *Nicolaitans*, *Rev.* 2. 14, 15. In like Manner our Lord says to *Thyatira*, *I have a few Things against thee, because thou sufferest that Woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a Prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit Fornication, and to eat Things sacrificed to Idols*, *Ver.* 20. From all which it is manifest, that as these Churches had a Power Dogmatically to judge of false Doctrines, which the Words in the strongest Terms import; so there was a jurisdictional Power connected with it, and belonged to them, which they are expressly censured for their being Remiss in the Exercise of. To be reprov'd for not censuring false Teachers, plainly supposeth, they were empowered to judge what was false Doctrine, and these Two are connected together in the same Subject. Now, what can be more evident, than, that if the Synod or Assembly at *Jerusalem*, had a Power authoritatively to determine in Matters of Doctrine by the Word, and condemn the Principles

ciples maintain'd and promoted by the false Teachers, who troubled the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, they had also at the same Time a Power of Jurisdiction, and could have exercised Discipline, or inflicted Censure on them in Proportion to the Nature and Demerit of their Crime? If the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, had this Power separately, their being joyned together with other Churches, all making up one Church or Ecclesiastical Judicatory, could never deprive them of it, whatever it might add to its Force. In a Word, This Synodical Meeting had a Power to send and conclude that the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, should observe some Things, and not observe Others, to lay Burdens upon them, or give forth Decrees binding their Souls to Subjection, and in all this acted under the Influence of the promised Direction of the Divine Spirit, and agreeable to his revealed Will; and therefore it must undeniably follow, they were vested with a jurisdictional Power, and had a Right to Exercise Discipline on the Obstinate, or such as should not comply with the Statutes enacted by them. This must be a Truth in itself evident, unless we shall suppose a Court vested with a Power to give forth Laws and Regulations, and yet not impowered to censure the Contraveeners thereof, which seems to imply a Contradiction. Thus I leave it to the unprejudiced Reader to judge, if our Author hath brought any Thing upon the Field, that hath the smallest Weight with it, to reject the Subordination of several or many particular Churches unto one Ecclesiastick Body, made up of all these, either *in propria Persona*, or by Delegation: Or, if he had much Ground to say from what he hath advanced, That it holds true: *For what appears from*

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Acts 15. *That Jesus Christ hath not subjected a Church of his, with its Presbytery, unto any Jurisdiction, in its Discipline.* From the Whole, it will not take so many Consequences to bring the Stamp of Divine Authority on our present happy Constitution, as our Author endeavours to obtrude upon the Credulous. And I must needs say, that Consequences lawfully deduced from Scripture Premises, have an absolute binding Force on all our Consciences, and he that rejects these, must Part with many valuable Truths; and as his not seeing of them will not be an Excuse for his Unbelief; so his seeing of them can never be the Foundation of a Divine Faith.

S E C T. IX.

The Absurdities of the Independent Scheme laid open, shewing its Inconsistency with the Genius of Ecclesiastick Society. Some further Remarks on the Defence of Mr. Glas's Proposition.

A Fifth Argument for establishing the Subordination of Judicatories, is taken from the gross Absurdities that follow on the *Independent Model*, even such as are opposed to the universal Genius of Ecclesiastick Society. 1. The refusing a Subordination, says in the strongest Terms, that tho' our Lord made a Provision for remedying the lesser Evils in his Church; yet, as to the grosser Scandals, Heresies and Schisms, there is no suitable Remedy for their Removal, or any Means for preventing thereof. What can be done in this Case, when a particular Church is divided into Factions; its *Presbytery* is in a Division among them-

themselves; or the Church from the *Presbytery*; or the Members of one Church are in a Schism from these of a neighbouring Church? Is it supposeable, while the Remains of Self and Corruption are in Men, that bare Recommendations, Counsels or Admonitions, will be a Remedy in such Cases? Daily Experience, and the Examples of others that have gone before us, furnish us with a quite other View of Things; and plainly tell, that nothing less than Provincial or National Assemblies can prove a Remedy, where Christianity is so largely diffused. This, we find, was the Remedy made Use of by the Primitive Churches, against the *Arians*, *Nestorians*, *Eutychians*, and *Macedonians*, which after Ages never look'd upon as Tyrannical or Antiscriptural. Nay, the rejecting of this Remedy gives open Access to all Manner of Sects and Opinions; and nothing could hinder one Company to be for *Paul*, another for *Cephas*, and a third for *Apollo*; and so there should be, in a short Time, as many Modes of Worship, and great Variety of Notions in the Matters of Eternal Concern, as there were feverish and distempered Brains in a Kingdom to set up for Leaders and Guides. At this Rate, every conceited Mechanick should have free Access to leap from the Shop-board or Plough into the Pulpit, and thus, *per saltum*, by a prodigious Leap, commence a Teacher. And what more clear Demonstration can we have of these fatal Effects, arising from the casting off the *Subordination* of Ecclesiastical Judicatories, than the innumerable Disorders, and most scandalous Schisms and Sects, that, as a Flood, overspread our neighbouring Kingdom, in the former Age, to the great Disgrace of Christianity, and opening a Door to the common Enemy? How melancholy is it to look

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look back, and take a Review of the Circumstances the Kingdom of *England* was in, when one Altar was erected against another, and every Pretender to new Lights had his Followers? For a Confirmation of this, I shall here transcribe a Passage from Mr. *Bastwick*, which is to be found in Mr. *Baylie's Disswasive*, Page 95. His Words are, "Be
 " fore the *Independents* appearing in our Horizon,
 " there were but three or four Sects known among
 " us, and they were few in Number, and well
 " condition'd; but out of the *Independent's* Lungs
 " are sprung above forty several Stragglers, which,
 " before their coming over, were never heard of
 " among us. *John Lilburn* related it unto me,
 " and that in the Presence of others, that return-
 " ing from the Wars to *London*, he met forty
 " new Sects, and many of them dangerous ones,
 " and some so pernicious, that howsoever, as he
 " said, he was, in his Judgment, for Toleration
 " of all Religions; yet he professed he could scarce
 " keep his Hands off them, so blasphemous they
 " were in their Opinions: So that he gathered,
 " that these were now the last Days, wherein so
 " many Heresies abounded. There are innume-
 " rable diabolical Sects, and so prodigiously im-
 " pious, that it is not for a Christian to name
 " their Opinions; and most of them, if not all,
 " were first *Independents*, and such as separated
 " from our Congregations, as unholy, and were
 " of the new gathered Churches, and Followers of
 " their Ministry." He that inclines to see more
 to the same Purpose, may consult the forecited
 Author. And indeed, an universal boundless To-
 leration of all Religions is the native Fruit of
Independent Government, and one of the Principles
 maintain'd by its Followers. And had it not been
 for

for these, Presbyterian Government had been universally established throughout *Great Britain and Ireland*. As an Evidence of this, I shall transcribe a few Lines of Mr. *Edward's Antapology*, "I am confident, had it not been for you Five *, and a few more, the Reformation intended had been in a far fairer Way than now it is. Brethren, there are many Complaints, and that by your dear Friends, of the retarding the Work of Reformation by your Means. You are the *Remora* to the Ship under Sails; you are the Spokes of the Wheels of the Chariot of Reformation. Parliament complains, Assembly, City, Country, all complain of the Work retarded, and all is resolved into you Five principally. I could tell you many particular Passages, but you know what I mean. In a Word, all the Prelates and the Papists cannot, nor do not hinder so much the Work of Reformation, as you Five Members of the Assembly." Again, Mr. *Prynne*, in his *Fresh Discovery*, says of the *Independents*, "They lately conspired together, to exhibite a Petition to the Parliament, for present Dissolving the Assembly, and sending them home to their Country Cures, to prevent the settling of any Church Government; to which End they met at the *Wind Mill Tavern*, where *John Lilburn* sat in the Chair, and Mr. *Hugh Peters* suggested the Advice, which was accordingly inserted in the Petition." Again, Mr. *Bastwick*, "The Presbyterian Government not suiting with their Humour, they abhor it, and all such as endeavour to establish it; and wish rather, that all the old Trumpery were brought in again; and

* Mrs. Philip Nye, Tho. Goodwyn, Sydrach Sampson, William Bridge, and Jeremiah Burrenghs.

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“ profess they had rather have the Government of
 “ the Prelates: Yea, some of them have not been
 “ ashamed to protest unto the Prelatical Priests,
 “ that before the Presbyters shall rule over them,
 “ they will cut all their Throats, and joyn with
 “ them for their establishing of the Hierarchy.”
 And a little after, he adds, “ I know not any *In-*
 “ *dependent* in *England*, except one Man and his
 “ Wife, that do not as maliciously and implacably
 “ hate the Presbyterians, as the mortallest Ene-
 “ my they have in the World.” He that inclines
 to see more to this Purpose, may consult the above-
 cited Mr. *Baylie*, Pag. 94, 95, 96, &c. I shall on-
 ly add, That the first who opposed Ecclesiastick
 Assemblies, were the *Anabaptists*, who, being un-
 cessantly set for an universal Liberty, did lay out
 themselves for overturning all Order in Church and
 State, and pretended an absolute *Independency* in
 their Actions and Notions to any Court under
 Heaven. Their first Follower, among any of the
 Reformed, was one *John Moreau* a *Persian*, who
 vented the *Independency* of Congregations on Sy-
 nods, when he was in the *French* Church, and set
 up for Popular Government: But no sooner did he
 publish a Pamphlet for propagating these Princi-
 ples, than it was universally run down by the
French Divines. And thereafter, a General Assem-
 bly held at *Rochel*, where the Reverend *Beza* was
Moderator, took these Notions under Consideration;
 and the Learned *Sadeell*, with others of the *French*
 Divines, did so effectually baffle these *Anabaptisti-*
cal Principles, that they never more appeared in
 that Church. They were indeed, afterwards, en-
 tertain’d by *Grotius*, and other of his *Arminian*
 Followers; and all the *Remonstrants* embraced them,
 when they understood they were in Danger to be
 brought

brought to an Account for their Errors before the Synod of *Dort*. And, for the same Reason it was, after the Sitting of that Assembly, they made so great an Outcry against *Queries* being put to them, whether they owned or adhered to the Principles that were said to be vented by them, as being contrary to Christian Liberty. This much, in short, may suffice, to give a View of the Rise and Tendency of *Independent Principles*, or what every sober Christian was to expect, if these Libertine Principles should take Place. The restless Endeavours of the *Independents* made them attempt to have introduced their Principles into *Scotland*, but all in vain, save a few Handful that for some Time joyn'd them at *Aberdeen*: And what was the Event, with Respect to many of these, is too well known.

2. Again, the casting off an Ecclesiastical *Subordination*, was attended with this Absurdity, namely, that one single Church, made up of a few Members, and under the Inspection of two or three Rulers, have a greater Authority, than when that very Church is joyned into one Ecclesiastical Society with many such Churches. This is no better than to say, that the Authority of the Magistrates in one Burgh, is of greater Influence, than when these of many Cities are joyned together in one Common Council: Or, the States of one Province have a greater Power, than these of many such united in one Commonwealth. But the very Light of Reason, which is, by no Means, opposed to that of Revelation, will say, that in a Synodical Assembly, there is not only the Authority of any particular Church, but that of many others, all joyned together in one Sacred Body. And if the Rulers of any one of these are impow-
ered

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ered to exercise Discipline and Jurisdiction over one Flock; what can be more agreeable to the Principles of sound Reason, than, that the Rulers of many Churches in one Ecclesiastick Body; should, at least, have equal Power and Authority over all these Flocks represented by them. In a Word, *Independent* Notions of Church Government are cross to all the Rules of solid Reason, and sap the very Foundations of the Unity, Order and Edification of the Visible Body of Christ; whereas, what we plead for, the Reason of the Thing adds its Force to the true Maxims of Sacred Government, and the Authority and Example of the Apostolick Churches, which all conspire in supporting and vindicating Synods or National Assemblies; and that we may allude to the Words of Solomon, *A threefold Cord is not easily broken.*

3. Again, Take away the *Subordination* of Ecclesiastical Judicatories, how is it possible to have a common Standard of Doctrine and Worship, or a Confession of Faith to obtain universally in any Nation or Kingdom where Christianity is generally profess'd, in order to promote Uniformity in the Matters of Religion; prevent the introducing of Errors and Heresies; and give every private Christian a plain and succinct View of what he is to believe concerning God, and what Duty God requires of him. Either this must be done separately by the Eldership of every Congregation, or by all of them in one Kingdom conjunctly assembled in one Ecclesiastick Body? If it be performed separately, it is but an exposing themselves to the Ridicule of the World, when what is written or composed by these, without Inspiration could not be Uniform, either in Words, Method or Order; so the End was not obtained. If this should

should be the Work of a whole Assembly, then one Ecclesiastical Judicatory made up of the Representatives of all these particular Churches, of which this Confession was to be the common Standard, was to be conven'd, in Order to digest the Method, and draw up the Draught thereof; and by this we shall have a conjunct authoritative Determination of a Synod, whether it be a Province or Nation. For either this Confession is approved by all the particular Churches represented, and what was Synodically determined, gone into, or not? If it be gone into by all, here is a Subjection to the Determination of the Synod, and their Authority is acknowledged. If it shall be rejected by one or more Churches, either in Part or in Whole, then either these must be condemned for the Rejection, or left to themselves? If they be condemned, then it is, beyond Question, an authoritative Sentence is denounced against them: If they be left to themselves, then, by the Decision of the Plurality, it must be determined, that they are thus to be left out. Now, I would gladly know by what Authority this is enacted, if it be not by that of the Rulers of a Plurality of Churches joyned together in one Church or Ecclesiastick Assembly? After all, I cannot help thinking, that *Independent Principles* are Enemies to all publick Standards and Confessions, seeing they strike off the very Means by which they can be effectuate and brought about. Thus, tho' the Five Dissenting Brethren already mentioned, joyn'd with the *Westminster Assembly*, till they had drawn up the *Confession of Faith*, and *Larger and Smaller Catechisms*; yet, when they came to Church Government, they engaged them in long Debates, and kept the Matter as long as they could undetermined.

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ned. This prov'd the Source of all the after Sectaries in *England*. And Mr. *Baxter* says*, " Seeing
 " Posterity must know what they have done to
 " the Shame of our Land, and of our Sacred Pro-
 " fession, let them know thus much more also, to
 " their own Shame, that all the Calamities that
 " have befallen us by our Divisions, were long
 " foreseen by many; and they were told and warn-
 " ed of them Year after Year. They were told,
 " that a *House divided against itself could not stand*,
 " and that the *Course they took would bring them to*
 " *Shame, and turn a hopeful Reformation into a*
 " *Scorn, and make the Land of their Nativity a Place*
 " *of Calamity and Woe* : But the Warning signified
 " nothing to them; but these ductile Professors
 " blindly followed a few self-conceited Teachers
 " to this Misery; and no Warning or Means could
 " ever stop them.

" A few dissenting Members of the *Westminster*
 " *Assembly* began all this, and carried it far on.
 " That good Man, Mr. *Jeremiah Burroughs* joyned
 " himself to them in Name; but as he never prac-
 " tised their *Church-gathering Way*, so, at last,
 " he was contented to have united, upon the
 " Terms which were offered them, and wrote an
 " excellent Book of *Heart-Divisions*. Afterwards
 " they increased, and others joyned themselves to
 " them, who, partly by Stiffness, and partly by
 " Policy, increased our Flames, and kept open
 " our Wounds, as if there had been none but they
 " considerable in the World : --- O what may not
 " Pride do! and what Miscarriages will not
 " false Principles and Faction hide! One would
 " have tho't, That if their Opinions had been cer-
 " tainly true, and their Church Order good; yet
 " the

* See *Calamy's Abridgment*, Pag. 84, 85, 97.

“ the Interest of Christ, and the Souls of Men, and
 “ of great Truths, should have been so regarded
 “ by the Dividers in *England*, as, that the Safety
 “ of all these should have been preferred, and not
 “ all ruin’d, rather than their Way should want
 “ its carnal Aim and Liberty : And, that they
 “ should not tear the Garment of Christ all to
 “ Pieces, rather than it should want their Lace.”
 This much may serve to give a further View of the
 Tendency of *Independent Principles*.

4. Again, according to the *Sectarian Scheme*, which makes every particular Church *independent*, there is no Provision made for propagating the Gospel among the Heathens and Infidels. According to *Independent Principles*, no Pastor ought to preach the Gospel without the Bounds of his own Flock (a), as a Pastor, or be sent to perform the Function of the Ministry to another Congregation. Now, *How shall they believe, or hear without a Preacher ? And how shall they preach, except they be sent ?* Rom. 10. 14, 15. But sure, if this be a good Principle, it is not well adapted for making the Knowledge of Christ fill the Earth, and to bring the Nations into Subjection to his Crown and Dignity.

5. The same Principles establish an absolute Tyranny in the Church of Christ, by subjecting the Ministry, their Doctrine, and every Part of their Sacred Administrations to the Body of the People. What shall be the Event, if every private Christian must have a Negative upon their Ministers, and all their Ministrations must be subjected to their Bar ? I shall only give an Instance of the Effects of this, from the Learned (b) Mr. Baylie, “ The Fruits of this Way in *Holland* are
 Y “ not

(a) English Puritanism, Page 6. Mr. Best's Church Plea, Arg. 8. Page 73, 74. (b) Ubi supra, Page 75, 76.

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“ not much sweeter than these we have tasted in
 “ *New England*. All the Time of their Abode
 “ there, they were not able to conquer to their
 “ Party more than two Congregations; and these
 “ but very small ones, and of the *English* only :
 “ — Their first Church in *Holland* was at *Rotter-*
 “ *dam*, which Mr. *Peters* (not the most settled
 “ Head in the World) did draw from its ancient
 “ Presbyterian Constitution; to that new Frame,
 “ which, it seems, he also learned by Mr. *Cot-*
 “ *ton's* Letters from *New England*. This Church
 “ became no sooner Independent, than it run in-
 “ to the Way of such shameful Divisions, as their
 “ Mother at *Amsterdam* had gone before them.
 “ Their Pastor Mr. *Peters* was soon weary of
 “ them, or they of him : For what Causes them-
 “ selves best knew ; but sure it is, he quickly left
 “ them, and went for *New England*. The Church
 “ was not long destitute of Pastors; for, about
 “ that Time, Mr. *Ward* and Mr. *Bridge* came
 “ over to them from *Norwich*.-- So soon as they
 “ came to *Rotterdam*, without any long Time of
 “ Advisement, they conformed themselves to the
 “ Discipline which Mr. *Peters* had planted; they
 “ renounced their English Ordination and mini-
 “ sterial Office, joyning themselves as mere pri-
 “ vate Men to that Congregation, which, after-
 “ ward, did choose and ordain both of them to be
 “ their Ministers. It was not long before Mr.
 “ *Simpson* also came hither from *London*, and, re-
 “ nouncing also his Ordination, joyned himself as
 “ a private Member with them. Then did the
 “ Spirit of Division begin to work among them,
 “ and so far to prevail, that Mr. *Simpson*, Male-
 “ content with Mr. *Bridge*, for hindring the pri-
 “ vate Members of the Flock to prophesie after
 “ the

“ the *Brownists* Way, did separate himself, and
 “ erect a New Congregation of his own: Be-
 “ twixt these two Churches the Contentions and
 “ Slanders became no less grievous than those of
 “ *Amsterdam*, betwixt *Ainsworth* and *Johnson’s* Fol-
 “ lowers; and in this much worse, that they of
 “ *Rotterdam* abode not at one Schism; but, after
 “ Mr. *Simpson’s* Separation, broke out again into
 “ another Subdivision. Mr. *Bridge’s* Congrega-
 “ tion was so filled with Strife, so shameful Slan-
 “ ders were laid upon his own Back, that Dis-
 “ pleasure did hasten the Death of his Wife, and
 “ did well near kill himself, making him oft pro-
 “ fess his Repentance, that ever he had entred in-
 “ to that Society. As for Mr. *Ward*, his Mini-
 “ stry became so unsavoury to that People, that
 “ they did never rest, till judicially by their own
 “ Authority alone,— they had deposed Mr. *Ward*
 “ from his Pastoral Charge, tho’ Mr. *Bridge* dis-
 “ sented from it. This Act was much stumbled
 “ at by divers, who were fully perswaded of Mr.
 “ *Ward’s* Integrity, and at last, by the Interces-
 “ sion of some from the Church of *Arnheim*, he
 “ was restored to his Place; but the Ground of
 “ the Controversy was no Ways touched: For,
 “ when the four Commissioners from *Arnheim*,
 “ Mr. *Goodwyn*, Mr. *Nye*, Mr. *Laurence* and ano-
 “ ther, had met in a Chamber of a private House
 “ in *Rotterdam*, with some Members of that fault-
 “ ty Congregation, and so made up their famous
 “ Assembly, which the *Apologists* are pleased to
 “ equal, if not prefer to all the Assemblies they e-
 “ ver had seen, &c.” He adds, “ That Assembly
 “ at *Rotterdam* did not so much as touch the
 “ main Question; they drew a thin Skin over the
 “ Wound, but durst not essay to lance it to the

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“ Bottom. For, did they ever rebuke, or so much
 “ as once speak to the People of that Congrega-
 “ tion for usurping a tyrannical Authority to de-
 “ pose their Minister? Did they tell Mr. *Ward* of
 “ his siding with Mr. *Simpson* against Mr. *Bridge*,
 “ in the Matter of Prophecy? Did they ever at-
 “ tempt to cognosce on the great Scandal, the
 “ Ground of all the rest, Mr. *Simpson*’s Separation?
 “ Did they make any hearty and solid Reconcili-
 “ ation betwixt Mr. *Ward* and the Church? It
 “ seems, the Assembly was wiser than to meddle
 “ with Evils, which they found much above their
 “ Strength to remedy. Mr. *Ward* found himself,
 “ after his Restitution, in so pitiful a Condition
 “ with his new Friends, that he left their Compa-
 “ ny. The two Churches were irreconcilable, till
 “ both Mr. *Bridge* and Mr. *Simpson* had removed
 “ their Stations to *England*; and even then, the
 “ Concord could not be obtained, till the *Dutch*
 “ Magistrate had interposed his Authority.” He
 has much much more to the same Purpose, which
 would exceed my Design to transcribe here, to
 which I refer the Reader.

6. In the last Place, the casting off the Subordi-
 nation of Ecclesiastical Judicatories, overturns the
 Apostles Exhortations, and narrows them beyond
 the Intention of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 14. 32, 40.
The Spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets.
Let all Things be done decently and in Order. Here
 I meet again with our Author, saying, Pages 55, 56.
But from the Context, and the Epistle, it is visible,
these Rules are laid down for a Congregation meeting
from Time to Time in one Place, to prophesie and
hear prophesying, and to partake of the Lord’s Sup-
per; and the Apostle tells them, God is not the Au-
thor of Confusion, but of Peace, and this is in all
Churches

Churches of Saints; so that these Rules can carry us no further, than *Congregations or Churches of Saints*. In all this, we have nothing but his bare Assertion, without giving us the least Shape of an Argument to support what he advanceth. And indeed, all he hath here asserted, goes upon the Supposition, that the Church of *Corinth* was one single Congregation that met together in one Place for Publick Worship; which is a plain begging of the Question, seeing, he hath said nothing to make it appear. He says, Page 16. *The Church of Corinth was a numerous Church, but still one Congregation, and a Church of the same Kind with that of Cenchrea, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20, 22. 1 Cor. 14. 23.* I shall not stay here to speak at full Length unto the Constitution of the Church of *Corinth*, seeing it will fall in afterwards; only let it be observed, 1. That there is a Plurality of Churches expressly said to be in the Church of *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 13. 34. *Let your Women keep Silence in the Churches*, ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις. What can be more express, to fix a Plurality of Congregations here, than when the inspired Penman says, *Let your Women keep Silence*, not in the Church, but the Churches? So, according to the express Letter of Sacred Writ, we find there were Churches in the Church of *Corinth*; and what is the Amount of this, but, that there was there a Plurality of single Congregations, in one Presbyterial Church? And tho' in the preceeding Verse, there is mention of the *Churches of the Saints*; yet this Plurality of Congregations is specified to the *Corinthians*, in that it is said, *Your Women*, which restricts it immediately to the Persons to whom the Epistle was indited. It is indeed true, the Prohibition holds universally; but here it had a particular and immediate

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Respect unto that Church, where there was no small Abuse by their Women's appearing in Publick Assemblies, and there making Prophecies, which the Apostle had a special Eye to in this Prohibition, and puts a Check to it in all their Churches or Congregations. And as for the Church of *Ceuchbrea*, our *Author* ought to have proven it was a single Congregation, before he had made use of it as an Example, which will be more than difficult for him to do. And, in the next Place, tho' it could be proven, it will be no less difficult to make it good, that it was not under the Presbyterial Government of the Church of *Corinth*, in as much as it was a Sea-port Town or Harbour belonging to that famous City, as is asserted by *Origen* in the *Preface* to his *Epistles*, and in its very Neighbourhood. And when, according to our *Author's* Confession, the Church of *Corinth* was numerous, how could they meet in one Place, there being no large or capacious Temples to convene in, till about the Time of *Constantine*? Large and sumptuous Buildings were not in the Apostles Days allowed to Christians; they satisfied themselves (a) with private Oratorys or Chapels; which continued to be the Places of Worship, till, in After-ages they were built, partly, by the Munificence of Emperors (b), and partly, by the Liberality of private Christians in the Times of Peace. And so, according to *Sulpitius Severus*, in his first *Dialogue*, the Churches of *Cyrene*, in the Deserts of *Lybia*, were made of small Rods, interwoven together, and were so very low, that a Man could do no more than stand upright in them. And it is very probable, that the Meanness of the Churches

(a) Euseb. Hist. L. 8. C. 1. (b) Euseb. de Vita Constant. Lib. 3. C. 50, 51.

ches that were in the Apostolick Age, was the Ground wherefore *Ifidore* (a) said, there were no Churches in those Times.

As to the Scriptures alledged by our Author, *When ye come together in the Church, I hear there are Divisions among you--When ye come together therefore into one Place--What, have ye not a House to eat and drink in ? Or, despise ye the Church of God ?* 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20, 22. *If therefore, the whole Church be come together into one Place, and all speak with Tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or Unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad ?* 1 Cor. 14. 23. I say, as to these, they are never able to overturn what I have advanced from the exprefs Words in the Context. But, 1. It must be observed, that in the last cited Text, the Apostle lays it down conditionally, *If the whole Church be come together into one Place, and all speak with Tongues.*--Now, this is so far from establishing they all really met in one Assembly for Publick Worship, that it rather points forth the contrary, in that the inspired Penman is there reasoning from the Absurdity of the Thing, and says, in the strongest Terms, that it were disagreeable and impertinent, for all their gifted Persons, or those that spoke with Tongues, to meet in one Place, and there make use of them, which not being understood by the Infidels or Unbelievers, would be so far from Edification, that it would induce them to say they were mad. Besides, as was before observ'd, ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ, rendred *in one Place*, can never be demonstrative of their being one Congregation or Assembly for Publick Worship, seeing it is variously taken ; and the Learned *Grotius* says, it imports no more than their being together, or of

(a) *Iſid. Pelii. L. 2. Page 246.*

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one Accord, that is, of one Heart, and of one Mind in the Matters of Religion; and this is the main Scope the Apostle has in Eye in the whole of this Epistle. But, of the Import of this Phrase, and its various Acceptation, there has been enough said already on a former Head. And, that it plainly denotes that Oneness of Heart and Affection that was necessarily required to be among them, is evident from the Exhortations the Apostle immediately subjoyns, *Let all Things be done to edifying, decently and in Order*, Ver. 26, 40. So there is no Force in what is alledged from these Texts, to make any unprejudiced Mind go cross to the expresse Declaration of the Apostle, that there were Churches or Congregations in the Church of *Corinth*. Therefore, the Amount of all, according to this, is, that the Apostle supposeth, *not* that the whole Church was to assemble in the same individual Place; *but* only, that they should, in their Assemblies for Publick Worship, prophesie in a Tongue known to the Unbelievers, so, as they being *convinced and judged of all the Prophets*, might fall down on their Face, and *worship God, and say, God is in you of a Truth*, Ver. 24, 25.

2. Let it be further considered, that if the *whole Church*, or *much People of Corinth* that believed, were to be assembled in one House for Publick Worship; then it must undeniably follow, that all the Prophets and Teachers of that Church did Prophecy at every assembly they had, seeing it is expressly declared of the *Unbeliever, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all*, Ver. 24. But considering the Multiplicity of Officers then in that Church, what Time should it take to bring one of these Assemblies to a close? And what is more, the Text directly says, That at one Meeting, *Two or Three*

Three were only to Propheſie. Now if in one Congregation, at one Aſſembly, only Two or Three were to propheſie; then how is it conceiveable that all the Office-Bearers in that Church, could, in any Propriety of Speech, be ſaid to convince the Infidel, ſo as it may bear this Meaning, *he is convinced of all, he is judged of all?* Two or Three Prophets can never be accounted all Prophets. And how will this agree with the Apoſtles, *if all propheſie*, Ver. 24. if none but Two or Three were to deliver themſelves at one Meeting? In a Word, when it is conſidered, that the Apoſtle's great Scope in this Place, is, to rectify the Abuses that were in that Church, correct the Confuſion that was among them, by their numerous Multitudes propheſying at one Aſſembly, and reduce them to *Two or Three*, and thereafter he ſubjoyns, *Ye may all propheſie One by One, that all may learn, and all may be comforted*; it proves undeniably, this was to be performed in different Congregations or Places of Meeting. Thus he reduced them to Order, brought them to a regular Courſe of Management, and eſtabliſhed the Number that were to propheſie to them in one Aſſembly for Publick Worſhip. And ſo when it is ſaid, *If all propheſie, and there come in one that believeth not, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all*; it is to be underſtood in a diſtributive Senſe, and taken for their doing this in their diſtinct Congregational Meetings. By this we come to a plain and eaſy View of the whole Context, without ſtraining the Apoſtles Words, or bringing ourſelves to Inconſiſtencies, which thoſe who muſt needs have the whole Church of *Corinth*, including all the Believers, Prophets and Teachers, to make up one Collective Body, or ſingle Congregation,

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gation, cannot avoid. But of this more afterwards.

3. Our *Author* is very peremptory in his Assertion, *That from the Context and the Epistle, it is visible these Rules are laid down for a Congregation, &c.* But I cannot help thinking, that from what hath been said, it may be reckoned very agreeable both to the Context and the Epistle, that they belonged not only to a Congregation as such, but to a Presbytery, or several Congregations under one Common Government, and consequently to the whole visible Body of Christ. If *Decency and Order* is to be maintained in one single Church or Presbytery, *the Spirits of the Prophets* therein *subject to the Prophets*, and all done to the Edification of the whole Body, united under one Presbyterial Government; then it must follow that these Rules belong'd to many Churches, as well as Congregations. This must be undeniable, seeing many Churches, as well as many Congregations in one Church, are by the Spirit of God called one Flock or visible Body of Christ. So the Apostle *Peter* designs those Churches, which were dispersed throughout *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia*, one Flock or visible Body of Christ, 1 *Per.* 1. 1. & 5. 1, 2. *The Elders which are among you I exhort. --- Feed the Flock of God which is among you, taking the Oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly.* Now all these not being Members of one single Church, in any one City, but several distinct Churches lying remote one from another, and yet denominate *Flock*, it seems to say they were under one common Government, or had a Right to maintain Order and Decency among themselves, that their Elders were to do all Things for their being fed, or govern'd by a joynt Course
of

of Management, and in Order to this, the Spirits of the Prophets that were over them, of Necessity were to be subject to the Prophets, without which, Unity and Peace could not possibly be advanced. This Way of Reasoning cannot be rejected by our Author; for he lays a great Stress on the Church of *Ephesus's* being called the Flock and not Flocks, and says Page 17. *If that Church had been many Congregations united in a Presbytery, it would have been a Way of speaking very agreeable thereunto, to have said, Take heed to your selves and the Flocks.*---

Now, I would gladly know, if all these to whom the Apostle *Peter* endited his first Epistle, were one Flock, or single Congregation, meeting for ordinary in one Place for Publick Worship? Or, if the Strangers scattered through *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia* and *Bitbynia*, were not a Flock distribute into several distinct Churches, and removed as to Place one from another? If the First shall be asserted, it is contrary to common Sense, and makes the Apostle speak what he never intended. If the Second be true, which the Apostle asserts in the strongest Terms; then one Flock may be under the Government of a Plurality of Elders, tho' it be divided into several different Churches, in distinct Cities and remote Countries: And so, much more several distinct Congregations, all making up one Flock, in any City such as *Corinth*, or *Ephesus*; may be under the Inspection of one Class or Presbytery of Rulers. It is a Matter undeniable, that the Elders are in common exhorted to feed the Flock of God, tho' Members of distinct Churches. Now, to feed the Flock, is not only to dispense Word and Sacraments to them; but the Original Word, in the fullest Terms, says, they were to rule and govern it. And, if this one Flock was

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was under the common Government of the several Rulers that were set over them, it is undeniable, that the Apostles Rules were to obtain among all these; *the Spirit of the Prophets* was to be *subject to the Prophets*, and they, in the Exercise of Jurisdiction, were to promote *Decency and Order* in this one Sacred Body, and see that *all Things* were *done to edifying*. And indeed, the Apostle *Peter* recommends a Communication between all the Members of this Flock, however distant one from another, *1 Pet. 4. 8, &c.*

4. However positive our *Author* is, yet the Apostle, in his first Epistle indited to the *Corinthians*, gives us a clear View, that the Exhortations and Directions to Decency and Order, &c. have not only a Respect to a single Congregation as such; but extend to all the Visible and Catholick Body of Christ, which is orderly to be built up, decently ruled for its Edification, and preserved without Schism, *1 Cor. 12*. Here the Apostle represents the whole visible Church of the Redeemer, and expresseth the Diversity of Gifts for the Edification and building up thereof; which are all the Fruit of the same Spirit, proceed from the same Lord, and are the Work of the same God, who *worketh all and in all*, Ver. 4, 5, 6. These Gifts he had given, were the Word of *Wisdom and Knowledge*, *Faith*, *Healing*, *Miracles*, *Prophecy*, *Discerning of Spirits*, *diverse Kinds of Tongues*, and the *Interpretation* thereof, Ver. 8, 9, 10. The Body to be perfected and edified by these, *is one*, and *hath many Members*, and *all the Members of that one Body, being many, are one Body*: Ver. 12. This Body is such as is distinguished from *Jews*, and all these who were not Professors of Christianity, by the Sign of Baptism, and extended to all that acknowledge him, whether

whether *Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free,* Ver. 13. It was such as the Apostle expresseth in very lively Terms, from the Need it had of help, or the Necessity of an Ecclesiastical Polity from those who were its *Eyes, Ears, Hands and Feet,* Ver. 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22. In this great Body, the Members were to have the *same Care one of another,* that there might be *no Schism* therein, Ver. 25. Nay, it was to be so visible in the World, that not only its Members were to perceive the Sufferings of their Sister Members, and so mourn with them; but also their Prosperity, that they might rejoyce together, Ver. 26. In a Word, this Body is one Catholick Church, for the perfecting and Edification of which, and preserving it from Schism, its *Adorable Head* set in it, *first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers: Helps, Governments, &c.* Ver. 28. Now, I would gladly know if Christ set the Apostles, and other extraordinary Officers and Teachers indefinitely in one single Congregation, or confin'd them to such a Number of Christians, as could meet in one Assembly for Publick Worship? Or was not the Primary Design of the Redeemer in giving *Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers;* for the perfecting of the Saints, the Work of the Ministry, for edifying the Body of Christ; that its Members might not be *tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the Slight of Men, and cunning Craftiness, whereby they ly in wait to deceive?* Dare our Author say, that this Body of Christ was only a Congregation of Christians at Corinth, or Ephesus? Was it only these Churches who were to be brought to the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, and to a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of
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the fulness of Christ? Nay, the Apostles had the whole World for their Charge, and they and the other Officers, both extraordinary and ordinary, were the Gift of the Redeemer, for perfecting and edifying that great Flock, City, Kingdom or Body of Christ; this was the Primary Design of the Gift, and it belonged only to particular Churches and Congregations, as being Parts and Members of this Building, or Visible Body. I may illustrate this by a very plain and easy Example; our Lord's Primary Design, *Mark 6. 39.* was to Feed the whole Multitude with *Five Loaves and Two Fishes*, and their sitting down by *Companies on the green Grass*, was only a subordinate End thereunto, and what he proposed for the more easy Distribution of their Aliment and Food. Thus the Redeemer primarily intended to perfect, build up and edify his whole Visible Body, by his Ordinances and Ministry; this was the original Design of Ecclesiastical Government, and it belongs only to particular Churches and Congregations, in a secondary Way, and next to the chief End which he had in View as to the Whole, which in Order of Nature was before the other. From this I think it plain as any Thing can be, that the Apostolical Rules, *1 Cor. 14. 26, 29. 40.* *Let all Things be done to edifying; Decently and in Order; that the Spirits of the Prophets shou'd be subject to the Prophets*, do primarily belong to the whole Catholick Body of Christ, and in a secondary Way only to the Church of *Corinth*, as being a Part of that Body, and Branch of that Sacred Kingdom. For the Salvation of this Universal Church, it was, the Blessed Redeemer gave himself a Ransom, and to her it is, he bears an adequate Relation, as a Head and Husband, *Eph. 1. 22.* And so when he ascended up

up on High, he had the Unity, Peace and Edification thereof primarily in his Eye, and for the promoting of these, he left behind him a Ministry with full Powers, to Exercise both the Key of Doctrine, and that of Jurisdiction and Government. And thus, all the General Rules, laid down for the Government of Christ's House, and Practical Canons in any of the Apostolick Epistles, belong in the first Place to all the Members of this Family; and to particular Societies thereof, only in the secondary Place. And so what can be more manifest, than that one single Congregation, being but a Branch or Member of the whole Catholick Body of Christ, it is to be govern'd in Matters of common Concern by a greater or more large Assembly, than that of its own Eldership? Thus the Government of several Congregations by a Presbytery comes nearer to the Original Intendment and Genius of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, than that of a Session; and that of a Synod, nearer than that of a Presbytery; and that of a National Assembly, than that of a Provincial Synod, by how much it bears a nearer Proportion to the whole Catholick Body of Christ, than any of the former. And by this it will appear, we come to a National Assembly of Church Rulers, by fewer Consequences than we can do to that of a Provincial Synod, Presbytery, or Congregational Eldership, if we shall not go in the Face of the Apostles Reasoning, and make the primary Design of the Redeemer, in his establishing an Ecclesiastick Government in his House, Void and of no Effect. And indeed I cannot help thinking, that the Independents are the Persons, who diametrically oppose Christ, in the primary Design he had as to the Polity of his Kingdom, overset the very Nature of Things

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Things as established by him, and make the Censures of his Church to lose their Universal Influence. For, 1. By them the Influence of the amazing Sentence of Excommunication is narrowed, and only ejects a Person out of the Society of one single Congregation, and does not cut him off from the whole Visible Body of Christ. But Reason would say, and the Nature of the Redeemer's Kingdom, that as he was before Excommunication a Member of the Catholick Church; so by his being delivered to Satan, he is cast out from being a Branch of that Sacred Society: For it will not easily be conceived, that he whose Sins are bound in Heaven, as they are bound on Earth, can only be said to be cast out from a single Independent Congregation. He is unquestionably to be reputed a *Heathen* and *Publican*, not only by this and the other particular Assembly of Christians; but by all the true Members of the Catholick Church, and this arises from the Unity of that one Body of Christ, and the original Design of its Government. For tho' he be cut off by the Eldership of a Congregation or Presbytery, 'tis not merely by a Power inherent in that Body only, but by that which was antecedently inherent in the whole Universal Church; and the first is but as the Instrument or Hand of the greater Body, and is required to act for the good of the Whole, to keep themselves immediately from Infection, and the rest of the Body; in as much as it would gradually come upon it, if scandalous and obstinate Offenders should be tolerate.

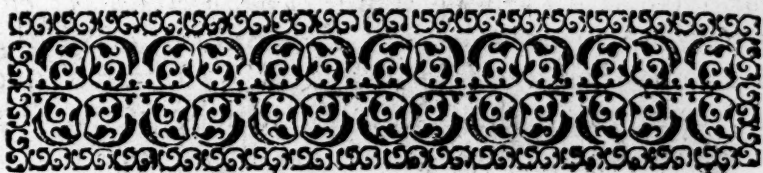
2. From the same *Independent* Notions it is, that boundless Liberty of all Principles, however gross and heretical, hath its Arise; and there is no Remedy for the curing of them, or preventing the
Visible

Visible Body of the Redeemer from being crumbled into Pieces, and brought into innumerable Schisms, contrary to the very Design of the Apostle, in the forecited 12th Chapter of *Paul's* first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. It is there expressly required, that there should be no Schism in the Catholick Body of Christ; and it was his great and immediate Design, in making a Deed of Gift of Rulers unto this Body, that it should be preserved in Order, Peace and Unity; whereas, by the *Independent Scheme*, there is no joynt Authority can be used for carrying on this great and noble End, but every separate Congregation may follow their own Course of Management, come of the rest what will.

3. From the same Source it is, that the very Nature of Things come to be subverted, and the smaller Parts of the Organical Body reject the Authority and Power of the whole; or, one Member of that great and Sacred Society, of which Christ is the Head, pretends to be *independent* on that Body of which it is a Member, and so leaves no Room for their *having Care one for another*, and preventing *Schism* therein. But certain it is, that every Society must have a Government, which belongs to it as such; and the same Grounds which render this to be necessary to any particular Congregation, will make it equally necessary, at least, for all these joyned together in one visible Society in any Nation or Kingdom. For the Unity and Peace of the greater Body is more to be look'd after, than that of any particular Congregation, in as much as the Peace and Unity of the several Members is comprehended in the Harmony, Order and Unity of the whole Body. And when it is objected, that the Notion of a Church implies an actual joyning together for Participation of all

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Gospel Ordinances, it is but a mere begging of the Question ; and it is evident, that actual Communion with any particular Church is not absolutely necessary to a Person's being Member of the Church : Upon the Supposition of One's being baptised at Sea, where there is no fixed Assembly of Christians, he is hereby a Member of the Visible Catholick Church, tho' not of any particular Congregation ; and so we may conceive a Church consisting of Members, which have a Right to Ordinances, without their being actually Partakers of Ordinances in particular fixed Congregations. And I readily yield to what Mr. Cotton says on the Sixth of the Song, namely, *That the true Catholick Church of Christ is the Mother of all reformed Daughters* : And he that entertains suitable Notions of this, must undeniably confess, that whatever Arguments can be brought for establishing a particular Visible Church, they must far more forcibly conclude for the Unity, Order and Peace of the whole Catholick Body ; this being the primary Design and original Genius of Ecclesiastick Government, and all the other Ordinances of the Redeemer's House. In a Word, the primary Notion of a Church does not belong to particular distinct Congregations ; nor are these the first Subject of Government which belongs to a Church, as such ; but the whole Visible Body of the Redeemer : And on this stable Foundation is the Prebyterian Scheme of Government inviolably established, against all the Efforts of its Enemies. And as for such whose Principles and Practices have a manifest Influence to overturn this stated Order of Things, they must be accountable for it.



CHAP. III.

The State of the Question between the Presbyterians and Episcopalians. The Identity of the Gospel Bishop and Presbyter. A Plurality of Bishops, and Congregations, in the Churches planted by the Apostles in several of the Cities in the Roman Empire.

SECT. I.

Episcopalians hold, that there can be but one Bishop in one Church, who has therein the sole Power of Ordination and Government. And, that Presbyters are an Order of Ministers, whereof there are moe in one Church, but inferior to Bishops. This confirmed by the Testimonies of several Episcopal Divines.

HAVING, in the preceeding Chapter, considered at some Length, several Points in Debate between the Presbyterians and *Independents*; we now come to take a further View of the main Difference between the Presbyterians and Episcopalians; And, in the first Place, we shall lay down the State of the Question; which we shall take from the Principles of our Adversaries, and their most famed Authors. And the first Thing to be observed, is, that it is an universally
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received *Axiom* among them, That *there can be but one Bishop in one Church*. This Bishop, according to them, has the *sole Power* of Ordination and Government in this Church; which, it may be, contains some *Hundreds* of *Parishes*; and one in *England* extends to all the Colonies in both *Indies*, belonging to the King of *Great Britain*; besides the City of *London* and its Dependents. Their next Position is, That *Presbyters*, of which there are more than one in one Church, are an Order of Ministers below Bishops, and have only a Power to read Prayers and Homilies, of Preaching and Administring the Sacraments. The Question then is, Whether our Lord, by himself or his Apostles, did institute *One* Order of Ministers, of which there were more than one in one Church, and to whom only the Power of Preaching and Administring the Holy Sacraments did belong; and *another*, of which there was but one in one Church, and on whose Person were devolved both Powers, that is, not only a Power with Presbyters to administer Word and Sacraments, but the sole Power of Ordination and Government. The last is what we absolutely deny; and we maintain, That both Powers were bestow'd on Presbyters, that is, such Kind of Officers, of which there were more than one institute in one Church, without any standing Superiors.

That I have not misrepresented our Adversaries in the State of the Question, will appear in the following Testimonies. The first is from Dr. *Hammond*, * “We affirm this Power in every Church
“ has always, according to the Institution of Christ
“ and his Apostles, belong'd to one single Gover-
“ nor, whom we commonly call a Bishop,” &c.
Again,

* Vol. 4. Page 719. Nos ad unum singularem Præfectum, &c.

Again, "The * only Thing in Controversy between us and the Presbyterians, is, Whether this Right belongs to a single Person, or whole College. We think, the Right of governing Churches is, in the Scripture, attribute to single Persons, who were, each of them, set over a single Church. They, on the contrary, thinking, they have prov'd, that the Terms Bishop and Presbyter are of the same Import in Scripture, affirm, that every City should be governed by a Plurality of Equals, whether you call them Bishops or Presbyters, and believe they are supported in their Opinion, by the Authority of the *New Testament*." He has much more to the same Purpose, Pag. 719. & 804. And in the End of his Note on *Acts* 14. 23. and in Page 719. he has these Words † remarkable, "Nor does the Controversy ly in this, by what Names the Governors of the Churches were called, or whether they were in all Ages called by the same; but, whether that Power in a single Church belong'd to one, or to a Plurality?" Of the same Mind was Mr. *Dodwell*, and condemns them as Hereticks, who do not maintain the *Axiom* already mentioned, *Dissert. de Unitatis Principio, quæ est Cyprianicarum septima*, §. 23. Comp. §. 15. And the Bishop of *Oxford* says, Pag. 118. 119. "This Rule was held Sacred in all Ages, that in one City there should only be one Bishop, or Chief Pastor." To him I may joyn the Sentiment of the famous Dr. *Barrow*, who calls it, "A fundamental Rule of the Church, necessary for preserving Peace and Order therein, that but one

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" Bishop

* Page 801. Nos singularibus personis singularum Civitatum propositis, jus regendi Ecclesias, in Scripturis attribui contendimus, &c.
† Nec igitur in eo Controversiam poni, &c.

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“ Bishop should be in one Church,” *Discourse concerning the Unity of the Church*, Page 306. See also his *Pope's Supremacy*, from Pag. 86. to 89. Besides, Bishop *Pearson*, in Answer to Mr. *Daille*, says, that this Maxim was held by the Fathers, “ The Ancients gave only this Reason for their Interpretation, *That there could be but one Bishop in one City.*” Thus, St. *Chrysostome*, *Jerom* and others, *Vindic. Part II. §. 13.*

And Bishop *Beveridge* * states the Question as we have done, “ The only Question is, whether the Apostles, before they left the World, committed this their Power of governing the Church, and ordaining others, to one single Person in each Church, or to a Plurality? That is, according to the modern Way of speaking, Whether they committed it to a Bishop, or a Bench of Presbyters? After this Manner we must state the Question concerning the Authority of Bishops over Presbyters, if we would ever determine it.” I might here give the Judgment of Bishop *Burnet*; but, for Brevity's Sake, I only shall refer the Reader to Pag. 306, 349, 350. of his *Vindication of the Church of Scotland*. And, that Presbyters are not allowed the Power of the Keys, is no less manifest; for, Dr. *Scot*, Vol. 3d of his *Christian Life*, Page 427. says, “ To shew what are the proper Ministries of the Government in the Kingdom of Christ. These are two Sorts: First, Such as are common to Bishops, or Governors of the Church, with the inferior Officers; and, secondly, Such as are peculiar to the Bishops

* Cod. Can. *Vindic. L. 2. C. 11. §. 13.* Queritur tantummodo utrum Apostoli, priusquam ex hac vita migraverint, &c.

“ shops or Governors. ” And after, when he reckons up the Ministries of the Church, which are common to Bishops and Presbyters, he gives us these Particulars. “ 1. To teach the People. 2. To “ administer the Evangelick Sacraments. 3. To “ offer up the publick Prayers and Intercessions of “ the Christian Assemblies. ” In all this, there is not one Syllable of the Latters having the smallest Share in Government; for this he reserves as the peculiar Privilege of the Bishops, whose Ministries he reduces to four Heads, Page 433. “ 1. To “ make Laws for the Peace and good Order of the “ Church. 2. To ordain Ecclesiastical Officers. “ 3. To execute that spiritual Jurisdiction, which “ Christ hath established in the Church. 4. To “ confirm such as have been instructed in Christi- “ anity. ”

And Dr. Hammond, in the 4th Vol. of his Works, Page 782. says, in the Contents of his Chapter, *Potestas in Ecclesiâ solis Episcopis ab Apostolis communicata*; *Power in the Church was given by the Apostles only to Bishops.* He has much more in the Place referred unto, to the same Effect; but I forbear to give any further Testimonies for the sole Power of Bishops, seeing this Point of the Question is made undeniably Good by the Learned Mr. Jameson, in the First Chapter of his *Cyprianus Isonomus*.

S E C T. II.

That the Power of Ordination and Government belongs to Presbyters, of which there were more than one in one Church; proved from the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters in the New Testament.

THE State of the Question being fixed, what remains, is, to make it appear from the Sacred Oracles, that the Power of Ordination and Government belongs to Presbyters, or such Kind of Officers, of which there were more than one in the several Churches planted by the Apostles. And the first Argument I shall make Use of for establishing our Assertion, is taken from the Identity of Name and Character of the *New Testament* Bishops and Presbyters. These, to whom the Apostles committed the Charge of those Churches which they planted, are promiscuously term'd Bishops, Presbyters or Elders. Names are not bare Sounds, without some fixed Meaning, and determin'd Signification; and so, when that of Bishop, Presbyter or Elder is express'd, it must afford us some Idea, and represent to our Minds, that the Persons design'd by these, were, by the Apostles, entrusted with some Charge, and had a certain Office assign'd them. Now, what that Character was, which the Inspired *Paul* express'd by the Name Bishop, or Presbyter, is manifest from the Charge he committed to such as he design'd thereby, *Acts* 20. 17, 28. *And he sent from Miletus to Ephesus, and called the Elders of the Church:* And when they were come to him, he said, *Take Heed therefore unto your selves, and to all the Flock in which the Holy Ghost has made you Bishops, to feed the Church*
of

of God. The Words of the Evangelist are most clear, that the Apostle sent from *Miletus* to *Ephesus*, and called the Elders, not of the *Churches*, but the *Church*; and so, as it stands in the Connection, we cannot conceive it to be any other than the single Church of *Ephesus*, especially considering, we have no where, in the *New Testament*, one Instance, where the Church in the singular Number, collectively taken, signifies more than a particular Church in some City, except when the Catholick Church is meant. Again, 'tis no less manifest, that these Officers, which the Inspired Penman calls Elders or Presbyters, in Verse 17. are expressly designed Bishops in the 28th. And what is more, as they were Ministers of the single Church of *Ephesus*; so, to them was committed the intire Charge of the Flock, without the least Hint of a Superior. They were to *take Heed to all the Flock, in which the Holy Ghost had made them Bishops, to feed the Church of God*. Now, to be Bishops, and feed the Flock or Church of God, signifies the highest Power of the Church. This is most clearly pointed out to us, when Christ is said to *Feed the Flock like a Shepherd* (a), and *Peter* is called to feed his Masters Sheep or Lambs. These Expressions include, that our Lord and his Apostles had the Power of Rule and Government, and so the Original Word is translated, *Matth. 2. 6*. And why they shall not have the same Signification here, with respect to the Bishops of *Ephesus*, I could never yet see a Reason. And from the whole I conclude, that these Office-bearers in the Church of *Ephesus*, being called Bishops and Presbyters promiscuously, and, at the same Time, having the whole of the Sacred Ministry committed to them,

'tis

(a) *Isai. 40. 11.*, *John 21. 15.*

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'tis evident to a Demonstration, a Presbyter and Bishop are the same, both in Name and Office, according to the Apostolick Stile. However light our Episcopalians seem to make of this Argument; yet its Evidence is so strong, that every unprejudiced Person cannot miss to see, that while they are vilifying it in Words, they are put to the most perplexing Shifts to get rid of its Force; some holding, that all these mentioned in the Text, were proper Bishops in their Sense, as Bishop *Bull* and Dr. *Hammond*; and others, that they were Presbyters and not Bishops, as Dr. *Whitby*, and many joyn him.

Again, the Identity of the Office of Presbyter and Bishop is further evident, from the Words of the Apostle *Peter*, 1 Pet. 5. 1, 2. *The Elders which are among you, I exhort, who am also an Elder, and a Witness of the Sufferings of Christ--Feed the Flock of God which is among you, taking the Oversight thereof.* Here the Apostle is writing to the *Jews*, and he designs their Office-Bearers, Elders or Presbyters, and in the strongest Terms gives them the Charge of the *Flock of God*, and requires that they should perform the Office of Bishops over them. In the forecited Text, Presbyters are expressly termed *Bishops*, and commanded to feed or rule the Church of God, and here they are required in the most ample Terms, to perform the Episcopal Office: ποιμαίνετε τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον τῆς Θεοῦ, ἐπισκοποῦντες μὴ ἀναγκαστῶς, *Feed the Flock of God which is among you, performing the Office of Bishops, not by constraint.* Now, to feed the Church, and perform the Office of Bishops, includes all the Parts of the Ministerial Function; and consequently, Elders or Presbyters are not only called by the Name of Bishops, or their Names promiscuously used

used by the inspired Writers of the *New Testament*; but their Work and Office is in every Respect the same. And if they have the Power of Ordination and Government, no less than dispensing Word and Sacraments, as the Words Feeding and performing the Office of Bishops, do import, they are the supreme ordinary Church Rulers, and the highest standing Officers. This was so pinching to Dr. *Hammond*, that he held all of them to be proper Bishops, and at the same Time, owns they had no Presbyters under them, that Office not being institute till long afterwards by St. *John*. But that ever that Apostle instituted this new Order, is what he leaves without any suitable Proof. Nay, that Bishops and Presbyters signify proper Bishops, is own'd both by Bishops *Taylor* and *Burnet*, and so, even according to them, they were the same both in Office and Name. And Dr. *Whitby* says, according to this Notion [*Hammond's*] the Names of Presbyters and Bishops were so far confounded, that a Presbyter, in their Stile, did always signify one that was properly a Bishop. Now, this being granted, it must require a very distinct Appointment to make them, afterwards, two necessarily and essentially distinct Orders of Ministers: And, till they shall be pleased to vouchsafe this unto us, we must take it for granted, that Presbyters and Bishops are the same both in Name and Character,

Again, This is further evident, if we consider, that the Power of Ordination, and consequently Government, which, by the Acknowledgment of our Adversaries, is always connected with it, was given to the College of Elders or Presbyters: *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of*
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the Presbytery *. This, according to the Learned *Daille*, was the whole Company of Elders and Ministers of the Gospel, which, in Scripture, are indefinitely called Bishops or Presbyters. And, as I formerly observed, it is most probable, it was the Presbytery of *Lystra*, † where *Paul* first met with *Timothy*. And indeed, the Word in the Original (τὸ πρεσβυτέριον) translated Presbytery, is only found three Times in the *New Testament*, the Text included, and never but in this Sense, *Luke* 22. 66. *Acts* 22. 5. Besides, the generality of Commentators, both ancient and modern, and even those who are most friendly to Episcopacy, such as *Stillingfleet*, *Hammond* and *Whitby*, &c. understand the Place in the Sense we plead for, and plainly say it denotes a College of Persons. 'Tis true, when some of these come to answer our Arguments from the Text, they seem to deny it; but in such a Manner as it is evident, they are not in good Earnest, and are only playing the Critick, to serve a Turn. I need only take Notice for a Confirmation of this, what the Bishop of *Oxford* says in his *Discourse on Church Government*, when making Answer to us, Page 300. That we are not to understand the *College* of Presbyters, but the *Office* of Presbyters. But, how evident is it, that he was satisfied there was no Reality in what he said, or at least had forgotten himself, will appear by his bringing in and advancing the same Text, as a Proof, there were then fixed Presbyters or Pastors in the Church. Thus, Page 114. "There was a Presbytery or College of Elders in the Place where *Timothy* was ordained: For, it was by the Imposition of their Hands he received Orders." He adds, "This was not done
"without

* 1 Tim. 4. 14. † Acts 16. 1, 2.

“ without an Apostle, and therefore the Grace,
 “ which in the Passage now cited, is conferred u-
 “ pon him by the Presbytery, in another Place,
 “ is said to have been given by the Imposition of
 “ *Paul's Hands.*” It is surprising to imagine,
 what Shifts and Inconsistencies Men are brought
 into, when they are over-ballanced by Interest and
 Prejudice ! This Prelate, in the first Passage, alled-
 ges the Office of Presbyters is to be understood ; in
 the next, he makes use of the same Text, to prove
 there was a College of Elders fixed in one Place
 or particular Church ; and yet, in Page 301. He
 suggests that the Presbytery may signify a Col-
 lege of Apostles and Bishops, or one Apostle and
 some Bishops, who joyntly laid their Hands on
Timothy. I do readily own, there were Bishops
 who laid their Hands on *Timothy*, tho’ not in the
 modern Sense ; yet I cannot well see, how the
 Bishop of *Oxford's* Sentiments will stand in a Con-
 sistency one with another ; but this I submit to
 the unprejudiced.

The like Pinch was Dr. * *Hammond* brought in-
 to, when he made some others of the Apostles to
 have joyned with *Paul* in order to make up a Pres-
 bytery for ordaining *Timothy.* But Dr. *Whitby* on
 the Text is more ingenuous, for he says, “ The
 “ Presbytery also laid Hands upon him, 1 *Tim.*
 “ 4. 14. But the χάρισμα or *Gift* here mentioned,
 “ being the Gift of the Holy Ghost, was usually
 “ conferred, by laying on of the Hands of the Apo-
 “ stles, *Acts* 8. 17, 19. Vain therefore is the In-
 “ stance of *Esthivius* from these Places, That Ord-
 “ nation is a *Sacrament*, seeing the Grace here
 “ mentioned is no ordinary Grace, but an extra-
 “ ordinary Gift; conferred only at those Times by
 “ the

* On 2 Tim 1. 6.

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“ the Hands of an Apostle, and now wholly ceased. Nay, the Learned † *Whitaker* against *Bellarmino*, maintains, that, from this Text, it is plain, that *Timothy* had Hands laid upon him by the Presbytery, who, he says, governed the Church at that Time by a common Council. But he adds, “ These will not allow that Presbyters had the Power of Ordination, but only Bishops. “ And therefore, *Bellarmino* will have the Apostle “ to understand a College of Bishops under the “ Name of Presbytery, who, together with him “ who was the Ordainer, put their Hands on the “ Head of the Person ordained. This he proves “ from *Chrysostom*, *Theophylact*, *Oecumenius*, who “ explain the Place after that Manner. Likewise “ from *Eusebius*, L. 5. C. 24. where *Irenaeus* calls “ the Roman Bishops Presbyters.” To this he answers, “ I confess, of old, there was no Difference between Presbyter and Bishop : He needs “ not therefore have adduced these Testimonies “ to have proven this. But, if these Presbyters, “ who were of old, and by whom *Timothy* was “ ordained, were such Bishops, as are now in the “ Church of *Rome*, then there were more Bishops “ in one Church or City than one, contrary to “ the Custom and Sentiments of our Adversaries.” This much, from an Episcopal Doctor and Learned Divine, might suffice to vindicate all we build on this Text, namely, that Presbyters have the Power of Ordination, and consequently Government, by our Adversaries Acknowledgment ; and so, all that we pretend to be in the Office of a Bishop, is in that of a Presbyter. And indeed, when they alledge, that this Ordination was performed by a College of Bishops, it is a
most

† *Priest. Controv. 2. C. 5. Page 184.*

most pitiful Shift, and can never better their Cause; whereas it supposeth there was a Distinction between Bishops and Presbyters in Sacred Writ; which, as it is a begging of the Question; so, at the same Time, it is a plain yielding of their Cause, and granting the Identity of these Names, and the Office signified thereby. For, if the Power of Ordination belonged to a Company of Persons called a Presbytery, that is, an Ecclesiastical Senate made up of such as have the Name of Presbyters; then, there can be nothing more evident, than that all we assert to be in the Office of Bishops, is in that of Presbyters, and consequently, both are one and the same in all Respects.

But some alledge, that *Paul* acted as Bishop of these Presbyters that ordained *Timothy*, and adduce as a Proof, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. Where say they, it is evident, the Efficacy of his *Presbyteratus* was in *Paul*, as in a Bishop, it being said, διὰ ἐπιθεσέως τῶν χειρῶν μου, by the Laying on of my Hands; whereas it is said only as to the Presbytery, * μετὰ ἐπιθεσέως τῶν χειρῶν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery. This old Popish Objection is sufficiently answered by Dr. *Whitby*, in the Words already cited from him. And to maintain the Harmony of Sacred Writ, it must be owned, that the Presbytery, no less than *Paul*, laid their Hands on *Timothy*, and so it was a joynt Act; and that which was peculiar to the Apostle in this, was only the conferring the Gift of the Holy Ghost, which he seems plainly to have an Eye to, when it is said, in the immediate following Verse, For God hath not given us the Spirit of Fear, but of Power, of Love, and of a sound Mind. And as for the Distinction that is made between the two Propositions

* 1 *Tim.* 4. 14.

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positions *διὰ* and *μετὰ*, translated by and with, that the first denotes an Efficacy in conferring an Office on *Timothy*, and the latter only points forth the laying on of the Presbyteries Hands for the greater Solemnity of the Action; it is nowise serviceable to our Adversaries, seeing it offers Violence to their own Cause. For, upon their *Hypothesis*, these Texts must have a Reference to *Timothy's* Ordination to be a Bishop; and the Design of the Epistle is, to quicken him to Fidelity and Diligence in that Office. Now, in the Ordination of a Bishop, the Hands of Presbyters are not allowed, even for the greater Solemnity, and therefore, they must, all of them that joyned the Apostle, have been Bishops, and so these Bishops only laid on Hands for the *greater Solemnity of the Action*, and their Deed, without an Apostle, was to no Purpose, and wholly ineffectual: And thus, there is an End of Ordination by Prelates. It is no Wonder to see Men run themselves into Inconsistencies, when they must needs defend a Cause, be it Right or Wrong. But there is no Weight in the Distinction, say the Presbyterians, for these two Prepositions are promiscuously used in the *New Testament*, as will appear from the subject Matter about which they are used. And so, *Acts* 15. 4. *And they declared all Things that God had done with them, μετ' αὐτῶν*: And, Verse 12. *Then all the Multitude kept Silence, and gave Audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what Wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them, δι' αὐτῶν*. And, *Acts* 14. 27. *They rehearsed all that God had done with them, μετ' αὐτῶν*. Now, in all of these Texts, the same Thing is exprest, namely, what God had wrought by them, as Instruments. And indeed, *διὰ*, render'd by, when joyned with a *Genitive*

native Cause, sometimes denotes the moving Cause of a Thing, as 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. But, for most Part, it signifies an instrumental Working or Efficiency, as *Rom.* 3. 30. And, in other Places, it holds forth the Way or Means for effectuating a certain End, *Matth.* 2. 12. & 7. 13. & 12. 43. But sure it is, *Paul's* conferring a Grace on *Timothy*, by the laying on of his Hands, and the Presbytery's putting on their Hands in making the Investiture of the Ministerial Office to him, do equally point forth the Instrumentality they had in the Matter. For, as these two Prepositions are promiscuously used, so the most that Church Officers can do, in the Matter of Ordination, is, ministerially to make the Investiture of the Pastoral Office to Persons qualified according to the Gospel Rule. The authoritative Power of preaching, and doing other Parts of the Ministry, is from Christ's Commission, and not the Persons that make the Investiture. The King's Charter to the City of *London*, is that which determines who shall be capable of being Provost of that *Metropolis*, what are his Powers, how he is to be chosen, and the Method of making the Investiture of these unto him; and so, the whole of what he is clothed with in that Station, is immediately from the Prince's Patent; and all that the Corporation can do, is, to determine the Person who is qualified, and make the Investiture to him of these Powers, according as they are warranted by the fundamental Law. Thus it is in the present Case; and no Man or Person on Earth have Authority to determine the Powers of Ministers, their Qualifications, the Method of their Separation to that Sacred Office, but in an Agreeableness to Christ's Commission, and the Rules given for that Purpose; and from

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thence it is, they have Authority to discharge the Ministerial Function, having received the Investiture thereof in a regular Manner. It is not by a Physical Touch of the Hand that the Ministerial Powers are conveyed, else every Imposition of the Hands of a Bishop, on Men, Women or Children, would make them Ministers; therefore it is a Moral Act; and the laying on of Hands denotes the Person duly qualified for the Pastoral Office, and the Ordainers, hereby, in Obedience to the Divine Command, declare his having a Right to the Power specified in Christ's Commission, dedicate him to God for his Service, and lay it upon him, faithfully to discharge the Trust committed to him. Thus then, Presbyters being impowered to impose Hands, which is an ordaining Act, says, in the strongest Terms, they have an ordaining Power, or Right to make the Investiture of the Ministerial Office to Persons duly qualified, seeing, *Actus præsupponit Potentiam*, the Act presupposes they have Power. And, if the imposing of Hands be not an ordaining Act, I would have a good and satisfactory Account what it is? And if it be not an Evidence of an ordaining Power, how comes it that the Episcopalians urge the Apostle's Command, *Lay Hands suddenly on no Man*, 1 Tim. 5. 22. as an Argument of Timothy's ordaining Power, and thence infer his being Bishop of *Ephesus*? In a Word, to say that one has a Power to perform the external Act, and use the moral Sign of Ordination, and not the Power of Ordination, is no better than to maintain, that one may be warranted to sprinkle Water on a Child in Baptism, and yet hath not a Power to baptize: Or, that he may consecrate Bread and Wine, and distribute it to the People, according to Christ's Appointment, and yet

yet has not a Power to adminiftrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. From the whole, I conclude this Reply, with the Words of the Learned *Daille*, in his 31 *Sermon on the 1 Epistle to Timothy*, "St. *Paul* and all the Company of Pastors laid Hands on *Timothy* at his Ordination. St. *Paul* as President, and the rest as Colleagues, according to the Practice which obtains among us, where it is usual for the Person appointed by the Synod, first to lay on Hands on him that is ordained; all of the rest of the Pastors present, afterwards joining with him in laying on their Hands on the same Person."

As for such as alledge that the *Presbytery* is not to be understood of a College of Elders; but the Office of Presbyters, and for their Support in this, advance the great *Calvin*, there is enough said already, namely, that the Original Word render'd *Presbytery*, is never us'd in that Sense any where in the *New Testament*. Besides, I perswade myself, the bare reading of the Text according to that strain'd Meaning, is enough to expose it to every judicious and impartial Reader: And it is, *Neglect not the Gift given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Office of Presbyters*. Now what Hands the Office of Presbyters has, is what I do not understand. And indeed it is but to make a *Nose of Wax* of Scripture, to make such a Trajection of the Words, as if *πρεσβυτερία* were to be joyned to *χαρισμα*, without some absolute Necessity; whereas, in the present Case, it inverts the natural Order and plain Construction of the Words, and instead of affording Light to the Text, gives it such a harsh and unnatural Meaning, as is hard to reconcile with common Sense. And as for Mr. *Calvin's* giving this Sense of the Place, it

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is not of such Consequence, and in this he is seconded be a very small Number; and these who make Use of him here to serve a Turn, will not be so ready in other Things to pay that Regard to his Character, which it justly deserves. Besides, in his Commentary on the Place, he says, *They who take Presbytery in this Place to be a Noun Collective, put for a College of Presbyters, do think rightly in my Judgment.* Thus 'tis manifest, that that great Man did not deny a College of Persons to be an agreeable Meaning. And after all, were this Sense allow'd, it makes not in the least for our Adversaries Purpose; but serves to support the very Argument we are insisting upon. For, by this Construction and Meaning of the Words, it must make *Timothy* to be vested merely with the Office of a Presbyter, and seeing he had the Power of Ordination by their own Confession, it follows, that mere Presbyters must have the same. Thus, let our Adversaries choose, which of the Senses they will stand by; if the Words denote a College of Persons or Presbyters, which is their genuine Meaning, our End is obtained: If they are taken to express the Office of a Presbyter unto which *Timothy* was consecrate, and by virtue of which he was vested with Power to Ordain others, or make the Investiture of the Ministerial Office to a capable Recipient, it still makes good what we contend for, namely, that mere Presbyters did Ordain. And in the close it may be observed, how desperate that Cause is, which requires so many pitiful Shifts for its Support.

Again, That Bishop and Presbyter or Elder are Appellations expressive of one and the same Office, is most clear from the Apostle's Direction to *Titus*, wherein he is required to *Ordain Elders in every*

every City in Crete. For having laid down the Qualifications of this Elder, that he must be *blameless, the Husband of one Wife, having faithful Children, not accused of Riot, or unruly*; he immediately subjoins the Reason wherefore he must be thus endued; *For the Bishop must be blameless as the Steward of God, Tit. 1. 5, 6, 7.* From this it is clear, that the Scope of the inspired Penman, is, that a Presbyter must be endued with such Qualifications, for this is necessary to make up the Character of a Bishop: So that to state an official Difference between the two, as different Orders of Ministers, at once overturns the Apostle's Reasoning, and makes it to be no better Sense, and his Argument as inconclusive, as if one should say, an inferior Officer must be thus qualified, because these are necessary to an Officer that is superior. I make no Question, but the Episcopalians will readily grant, that their Bishops must have more raised Qualifications, and be imployed in a distinct Work from these that are necessary to, and the Duties required of a Pastor or Presbyter; and so they must either grant that the same Office is express'd here by the Apostle, in the Names Presbyter and Bishop, and the Endowments required are the same, or impeach him with incongruity of Speech, and the most inconclusive Way of Reasoning. If any of our Modern Bishops should give an Order to his Arch-Dean, to allow none to be received in as a Curate in any Landward Parish, but such as were able to Preach, Rule and govern the Flock, in the due Exercise of Discipline, for this Reason a Bishop must be so qualified; would his reasoning by the rest of the Fraternity, be counted good Sense, while Bishop and Curate, are two extremely different Characters, and the one so far inferior to

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the other. And indeed, the Apostle's reasoning was no better Sense than this, if we shall suppose the Presbyter and Bishop mentioned by him to be two distinct Orders of Church Officers, the one subordinate to the other, as the Episcopalians plead. But it is to be observed, that some learned Criticks, who are acquaint with the *Syriack* Version of the *New Testament*, which is very Antient, and comes nearest to the Original, let us know, that it has not two Words, the one to express Bishop, and the other Presbyter, as our Translation and the Original *Greek*, but one Word for both. And therefore it runs thus, when translated, *I have left thee in Crete to Ordain Elders in every City, for an Elder must be blameless.* And Dr. *Whitby* on the Place declares, that it is the Meaning both of the *Greek* and *Latin* Commentators, that the same Person who is called Presbyter in Ver. 5. is designed Bishop in Ver. 7. From this he is made to conclude, that it seems that at that Time the Names were common: But I cannot help thinking, that considering the same Character is here given to all these to whom the Names then belonged, the same Qualifications required in those who were promiscuously termed Bishops and Presbyters; and from what hath been said in the Progress of this Argument, the same Work and Duties, even the Rule and Government of the Flock was committed to them, no less than Ordination; there is not only an Identity of Name, but in every Respect the sameness of Office, in those whom *Titus* was to ordain in every City: And indeed, the Dr. has said nothing that is new, and has only followed the old Popish Distinction which *Spensius* objects against *Bucer*, and to those
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it is they are obliged for all the Exceptions that are made against our Arguments. But,

What is yet more, The same Apostle, in his first Epistle to *Timothy* || gives him to know, what were the Duties of Bishops and Deacons, and the necessary Qualifications required unto each of these Offices, without making the least mention of Presbyters as an inferior Order, or stating the least Difference, between such as had both the Power of Rule and Government, and the dispensing of Word and Sacraments, and those who were only vested with the latter as their proper Province and Work. The Consideration of this seems to have had such weight with Dr. *Hammond*, that he looked upon it as a clear Demonstration, that there were no proper Presbyters in the *New Testament*; for says he*, “ Altho’ this Title πρεσβυτέροι, *Elders*, has been also extended to a second Order “ in the Church, and now is only in Use for them “ under the Name of Presbyters; yet in Scrip- “ ture Times it belonged principally, if not alone, “ to Bishops; there being no Evidence that any “ of the second Order were then instituted; “ though soon after before the writing of *Ignatius’s* “ Epistles, there were such instituted in all Churches.” These here mentioned by the Apostle, according to Bishop (a) *Pearson*, must also be Bishops in the Episcopal Sense, seeing he maintains that the Word Bishop always signify those that are now peculiarly called so. And Bishop *Taylor*, *Episcop. Assert.* Page 85. holds, That all those whom *Timothy* and *Titus* were to ordain, were proper Bishops. Bishop † *Burnet* is of the same Mind, and to get rid of the Inconveniency of the Apostle’s

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|| 1 Tim. 3. * On Acts 11. 30. (a) *Vindiciæ Lib. 11. C. 13.* † *Hist. of the Right of Prin.* Page 15. of the Pref. and Page 4, 6. of the Book.

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making no mention of the middle Order, he pretends he left out the lowest, and that the Deacons *Timothy* was to ordain, signify Presbyters. Now, according to this Notion, agreed to by so many Prelates, there were more Bishops than one in one single Church; for *Timothy* according to them was Bishop of *Ephesus*, and *Titus* of *Crete*, and so in these single Churches, there was not only in each of them one, but all these whom they ordained, were equal to themselves, and consequently made a Plurality, or in plain Terms a Presbytery; and this is all we plead for. Dr. *Hammond*, to get free from this Inconveniency, pursues his Notion, and makes *Timothy* and *Titus* Arch-Bishops of Provinces, with their Suffragan Bishops under them. But such as will hold this Principle, must at the same Time answer the Objections Dr. *Whitby* makes against it; and what is more, they must give a clear Proof, that the Church in the singular Number is ever used in the New Testament to denote any more than the Church in some City, except when the Catholick Church is meant. That *the Church* is taken distributively for several Congregations that may be in one City, from which it receives its Denomination, is owned; but that ever it is in express Terms made Use of to signify the Churches in several distinct Cities, united under one visible Head or Bishop, is a begging of the Question. This is such a Notion as must carry in it, that all the particular Churches in *Asia* were to be taken collectively for one Church under its visible Head or Bishop, which would require a very clear Proof to make it take with the unprejudiced. For tho' the Representatives of many Churches in a Synod or Ecclesiastick Assembly, may, in Scripture Stile, be called by the Name of Church

Church; yet this is something quite different from *the Church* including the Body of the Disciples, its being taken collectively for all the Rulers and Members of the several particular Churches in different Cities. The Reason is plain, because the *Elders of the Church*, *Acts* 20. 17. include the Body of the Disciples in the Denomination, and the Elders as its Organs, Ears, Eyes, Hands and Feet, *1 Cor.* 12. which can never come up to the Doctor's Sense and Meaning. Besides, the Doctor according to this Notion, must make the Deacons mentioned by the Apostle, to be these not of one particular Church, but of the seven Churches of *Asia*; for this is equally reasonable with the former. And no less singular, and at the same Time, pitiful is the Shift of Bishop *Burnet*, when he alledges that the Deacons *Timothy* was to Ordain, signify Presbyters; for tho' the Word *Deacon* is sometimes taken in a larger Sense, to signify any *Servant*, as the Word *Apostle*, to signify any *Messenger*; yet here it is expressly spoken of the Office of a Deacon, and they are required to *Use it well, and purchase to themselves a good Degree*; and as they were entrusted with the Poor's Stock, it is required of them, they should be Persons *not greedy of filthy Lucre* (a). But those who must say something to maintain a Cause, right or wrong, it is no wonder they plunge themselves into many Inconsistencies, and say that the inferior Office includes the superior, or the Office of Deacons signifies that of Presbyters.

But, what need we spend Time in refuting these Extravagancies? And, what greater Evidence can we have of the Desperateness of a Cause, than when those who are equally zealous for the Defence of it,

(a) *1 Tim.* 3. 11, 13, 8.

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it, overturn one anothers Arguments and Objections made against our Proofs? Thus Bishop † *Hoadly* maintains, the Terms *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are promiscuously used, and only denote such Officers as we now call Presbyters. Of the same Sentiments was Dr. *Maurice* *, and makes no Stand expressly to contradict *Hammond*. And what can be more mortifying, than when his Notion is so directly opposed by Mr. *Dodwell* ||, who freely owns, That Bishops were not institute till the Beginning of the Second Century? To these I might add many others, and particularly Dr. *Brett* *, who owns the Terms Bishop and Presbyter were used promiscuously, and, for some Time, expressed such as were only Presbyters. What an amazing Wrangle is this! Here is, plainly, one Order of Ministers called either Bishops or Presbyters; how they shall make out another from the *New Testament*, is what I cannot yet see. And, that these whom they alledge here, under the Name of Bishops, to be only mere Presbyters, without the Power of Ordination and Government, were possessed of both, seems to be evident to a Demonstration, from the Qualifications the Apostle requires to be in them. It was a Qualification of the Apostle's Bishop, that he should be *one that ruled well his own House*; and the Reason thereof was, that if he was not one that could bear a Right Rule in the Family of which he was Head, it could far less be expected he was capable of having the Care and Oversight of the Church of God. The Argument is taken from the less to the greater, and it being *negative*, it is most conclusive. Nay, according to the Mind of our Adversaries, the Presbyters the

† Brief Defence, Page 113. * Defence, Page 27. || Parzenes. ad Frat. Ext. Page 102. * Div. Right of Episc. Page 19.

the Apostle speaks of, must be these of the Church of *Ephesus*, to whom the intire Charge of the Flock was committed, and who were required to feed or govern it, or act the Part of Bishops over them, and so they were Presbyters vested with the Power of Ordination and Government, and this is all we plead for, and are easy whether they be called Presbyters or Bishops.

Moreover, it was the Qualification of the Bishop, of whom the Apostle speaks, that he should be διδάσκων *apt to teach*; that is, says the Learned * *Whitaker*, not such as only take Care and give charge that others teach, and commit that Authority to them for that End; but who is able and prone himself to teach; and this, says he, is *the proper Work of a Bishop*. And I could never yet see, but that preaching and Administring the Seals of the Covenant, were Ministerial † Acts of the highest Nature; and such as had a Right to dispense these, were vested with all the Branches of the ministerial Power. To preach the Gospel authoritatively in the Name of Christ (a), and, as his Ambassadors, to proclaim the Word of Reconciliation, and be Workers together with him, in *building up* and *bringing in* his Spiritual Seed, is more glorious, and worthy of greater Honour, than barely to be exercised in Rule or Government, or setting apart others to the Sacred Function of the Ministry. And if we shall consider a Power to bless and sanctifie Things, to represent, seal and apply the Body and Blood of Christ, which Presbyters are allowed to have, as well as the former; it is yet a more noble and honourable Act than that of Ordination, seeing the first is a Sacramental Dedication, which

* Praelect. contra Bellarm. Controv. 2. C. 3. Page 454, 455. † See Durand. in 4. Sent. Dist. 24. Quaes. 9. (a) 2 Cor. 5. 20. 2 Cor. 6. 1.

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which the latter is not. Shall these then who have a Power sacramentally to consecrate and set apart Things to the Service of God, have no Title to dedicate and set apart Persons duly qualified to the Ministry? Nay, the Inspir'd Apostle, when he holds forth the highest ministerial Acts committed to him, gives that of Preaching the Preference, and says (a), *Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the Gospel*: But our modern Bishops must needs have it, Christ sent us, neither to *preach* nor *baptise*, but to ordain Ministers, and govern the Church. Thus, if Ordination and Government had been the chief Parts of the Ministry, it is not to be thought, but they would have had the first Place, and been expressly mention'd in our Lord's Commission (b); but it is so far from running, *Go, ordain Ministers, and govern Churches*; that it is, *Go (c), preach the Gospel unto every Creature; Teach all Nations, baptising them*: And the other Powers which the Bishop monopolizes to himself, are left as included in the principal Acts which the Ministry are impowered to do by Virtue thereof, as is usual in most, if not all Commissions. And I cannot help thinking, that one may as well alledge the inferior Orders of Church-men include the superior, as, that a Commission expressing lower Acts of the Ministry, does include the superior; which would infallibly be the Case, if Ordination and Government were ministerial Acts, above that of preaching and dispensing the Holy Sacraments. And tho' it may be said, that the Administration of the Lord's Supper is not express in this Commission, no more than either of the other two, namely, Ordination and Government; yet the outmost that

(a) 1 Cor. 1. 17. (b) Matth. 28. 19. (c) Mark. 16.

that this could say, was, that it was not a ministerial Act of any higher Nature, or requiring any higher Order of Ministers to the Administration of it, than those who were impowered to dispense the Word and Baptism: And, after all, it is really mention'd in the Words of the Commission, *Teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded you*, among which this of the Lord's Supper is one, *Matth. 26. 26, 27*. Thus then, if Presbyters have a Power to preach, bless and sanctify Things, to represent, seal and apply the Body and Blood of Christ, which are the highest ministerial Performances, they must, unavoidably, have a Right unto those which are inferior, or, at least, no greater than these. For, as *Timothy* was possessed of all these Powers, and had received them before many Witnesses, *2 Tim. 2. 2*. so he is required to *commit the same to faithful Men, who should be able to teach others also*, without any Restriction, or the smallest Degree of Limitation. As to the different Notions of *Chrysostome*, represented by Dr. *Whitby*, they are fully consider'd by the Learned Mr. *Jameson*, in his *Sum*, Pag. 18, --- 22. From the whole, I conclude, that if the Episcopalians take the Bishops, mentioned by the Apostle, to denote Persons now peculiarly called so by them, then, according to their own Principles, which hold *Timothy* to be Bishop of *Ephesus*, there were more Bishops than one in one single Church: If they take them to be Presbyters in their Sense; from what has been said, they had both the Power of Ordination and Government, and so there were still more Bishops than one in one single Church, expressly contrary to their own *Axiom*. So then, we may justly infer, that Bishop and Presbyter, according to the Inspired Apostle, were the same, both

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both in Office and Character : Or, that by the Consent of all, there was one Order of Ministers, called either Bishops or Presbyters. Thus, we leave it to the Episcopalians to adjust their Intestine Divisions, and determine which Order it was, and give us some suitable Account where we shall find the Institution of another ; and when they have done all this, we shall consider their Light, and further examine it. We, next, descend to enquire into the Constitution of these Churches that were planted by the Apostles in several of the Cities in the *Roman Empire*.

S E C T. III.

That in the Church of Jerusalem, the first constitute Christian Church, there were moe Bishops than one, or a Plurality of Rulers, of equal Power and Authority ; proved from the Management of the Apostles in Parity, and of the Presbyters of that Church in Conjunction with them.

HAVING, at some length, enquir'd into the Constitution of the Church of *Jerusalem*, in Opposition to the *Independents*, and plainly made it appear, That there were several distinct Congregations therein, united in the Community of one Presbyterial Government ; all I shall further take Notice of in this Place, is, That in this single Church there were moe Bishops than one, at the same Time, who managed the Affairs thereof in common, and with equal Power and Authority. For, in her first Beginnings, and indeed for the Space of some Years, the Twelve Apostles resided at *Jerusalem*, and performed all the Parts of the mini-

ministerial Function in that Church, which is a plain Demonstration, that they were not Bishops in the modern Sense, but such Kind of Officers of which there could be moe than one, at the same Time, in one single Church. And considering, they managed all the Affairs thereof in Common, both as to Ordination and Government, it gives us the most undisguised Discovery of a Presbyterial Church; and plainly shews, that the Apostles, in their ordinary and standing Character, were all Presbyters, that is, such Kind of Officers, of which there could be moe than one in one single Church, at the same Time: And so, Presbyters must, of Consequence, have the Power of Jurisdiction, unless it shall be denied to the Apostles. Thus, using the Terms *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, according to the Episcopal Dialect, the Apostles were not Bishops, but Presbyters; seeing they were such Officers, of which there were moe than one acting in Parity, and with equal Power and Authority in one single Church. Hence, as it is a Matter wholly undeniable, that the Apostles were vested with the Power of Ordination and Government; so, it is equally certain, that Presbyters are their Successors, in all these Powers which are necessary for the Good, and truest Interests of the Church, and to be continued in after Ages. Now, as this brings the Controversy into a narrow Compass, and is bottom'd upon the Episcopal Maxim; so it must, at once, discover to the unprejudiced Reader, that there is no higher Office in the Christian Church, than the Presbyterate; and the modern Notion of Bishop is a Stranger to the *New Testament*. For, as none will have Face enough to say, They are of an Office above, and more absolute than that of the Apostles was; so it will be equally ridiculous to maintain,

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tain, they are such Kind of Office-bearers of which there can be but *one in one single Church*, who has the sole Power of Jurisdiction therein; seeing this were, at once, to establish a Monarchical Power, unprecedented by the Apostles. For it is desir'd, that the Maintainers of this Episcopal Character may give but one Instance, where ever any of the Apostles acted by themselves, but in Conjunction with the Presbyters, in any constitute Church; and, that they may produce a plain Answer to the Argument adduced, without vain Jangling. For, by what we can learn from the infallible Oracles, the Apostles were not such an Order of Officers as our modern Bishops pretend to be; nor is there any Thing to be learn'd from Scripture, that ever our Lord had it in View, to give Countenance to the Episcopal Scheme; For, in order to this, it was necessary he should have appointed each of them singly to preside over some one Church; whereas, the very first Christian Church gives a plain View of the Reverse of such a Constitution, by the Twelve Apostles acting therein, for some Years, in Parity, and with equal Power and Authority.

Thus, if we shall take a Review of their publick Managements, during the Time they were together at *Jerusalem*, it will appear, they observed the strictest Parity among themselves; and left to future Ages the clearest Pattern of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction. Somewhat of this is observable very soon after their Return from Mount *Olivet*, where our Lord's Ascension was. For, immediately on the Back of this, we find them assembled together at *Jerusalem*, and employed in the Temple, according to *Luke* *; but I humbly conceive, it is rather

* *Luke* 24. 52. *Acts* 1. 12.

ther to be refer'd to the Action than the Place, and so it is explain'd by the same Sacred Penman, *Acts* 1. 14. *And they all continued with one accord in Prayer and Supplication, with the Women, and Mary the Mother of Jesus, and with his Brethren.* The Place where they were, was not the Temple, as appears from the particular Mention of the *ὑπερῶον*, an upper Room, in which they were assembled, till the Day of *Pentecost*. Here it was, that *Matthias* was chosen, and numbred with the *Eleven Apostles*. And for clearing this Part of Management, it would be observ'd, that the Apostles had received their Commission immediately from their Lord and Master; yet, at this Time, it was not sealed by the extraordinary Down-falling of the Holy Spirit; and so, they did not presume to act in that extraordinary Consecration by their own personal Judgment, but devolved the particular Nomination of a Person to fill up the Place of *Judas*, on God alone; and for this End cast Lots, and appealed to him by Prayer for the Determination. By this it will appear, that the Choice of *Matthias* was, in some Respect, immediate, as that of the other Apostles, which was indeed necessary to that extraordinary Character. The only Question remaining is, Who were the Persons that were immediately concern'd in the Nomination of the two Candidates? In this, there have been different Opinions, some alledging it to have been the Province of the Brethren, or Congregation there present, others, the proper Deed of the Apostles. It is a Matter undeniable, that there were about 120 Persons present, and the Apostle *Peter* delivers himself in the Audience of them all; but the Sense and Substance of his Speech can never be constructed to bear an equal Concern and Interest of all present,

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in providing a Successor in the Room of *Judas*. That the Body of the People there present were Consenters, I shall not question ; but that the Apostle *Peter* immediately address'd himself to all in that Upper Room, and laid it on them as a Duty to provide a Successor in the Room of *Judas*, is not favour'd from the History we have of that Matter in the Apostolical *Acts*. For, tho' the Title of his Address runs, in our Translation, *Men and Brethren*; yet it must be remembred, that the Particle *And* is not in the Original Text, and therefore the Phrase can import no more but *My Brethren*, or, *Ye Men who are my Brethren in a peculiar Manner*; which seems to be the *Emphasis* of the Expression. That the whole Assembly were *Brethren*, in the general Sense of the Word, is owned; but, that the Apostles were *Brethren* to *Peter*, in a singular and eminent Manner, being united together in the same Office and Character, is a Matter beyond Question, at the same Time. Now, that the Subject of the Discourse appropriates the Speech peculiarly to the rest of the Apostles, is manifest, if we consider these two Things.

1. The Apostle *Peter*, when speaking of *Judas*, who had fallen from his Apostleship, his Words run, *He was numbred with us*, and had obtained a *Part of this Ministry*; which cannot be understood of any other than the Apostolick Ministry. This must, at first View, undeniably establish, That as *Judas* was not numbred with all the Brethren there present, as being Partakers of the Apostolick Office, but only the other Ten Apostles, in the Midst of whom *Peter* delivered himself; so it must be the Apostolick Brethren that are here to be understood, and to whom he mainly address'd himself, in order to the Number of Twelve's being made up to be Witnesses

Witnesses of Christ's Resurrection. Thus, the Series of the History makes it clear, and every Article of the Connexion favours the Sense we plead for; seeing it is said of *Judas*, Acts 1. *He was numbered with us*; and then it is added, *Wherefore, of these Men who have companied with us, all the Time that the Lord Jesus went out and in among us, must one be ordained to be a Witness with us of his Resurrection.* Now, what follows? *And they appointed two, Joseph and Matthias.* From this, it is natural to perceive, that *They*, in the 23d Verse, has a Relation to *Us*, in the 17, 21, & 22. Verses; and are both expressive of those who were Brethren in the Apostolick Office: And these mention'd in Ver. 14. are only set down as Witnesses and Consenters to the Deed of Separation of the two Persons.

2. It is observable, That the Tenor in which the Apostle *Peter's* Directions run, in order to point forth, out of whom it was that *Judas's* Successor was to be chosen, plainly favours what we maintain. For it is not said in the general, *some among your selves* must be chosen; but *of these Men that have companied with us*; which seems clearly to point forth, That tho' the Persons elected were out of the 120, yet the Apostle's Address was to some other Persons there present, to whom the Power of that remarkable and extraordinary Nomination did belong. It is said, *Out of these Persons that have companied with us, --- must one be ordained, to be a Witness*; whereas, the natural Expression, if the Direction had been to all the Congregation, would have run, *Choose ye out among your selves*; or Words of the like Import, as it is Acts. 6.

Thus, it is manifest, that the Choice of the two Persons, and the giving forth of the Lots, was the

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peculiar Deed of the Colledge of Apostles, who acted therein in a perfect Parity; *They prayed and said, and They gave forth their Lots; and the Lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbred with the Eleven Apostles.* From the whole of what was transacted, in this peculiar Consecration of *Matthias*, it is evident, That in so far as there was any jurisdictional Power exercised, it was the Deed of the Apostles, and none else. I conclude this Instance of the Apostolical Management, with the Judgment of the Learned *Beza*, when treating of the People's Right of Suffrage in Ecclesiastical Affairs, who says, * *It is nothing to the Purpose; and, that the French Churches had sufficiently proved that against Morellius and his Party, in their publick Synods.*

The next Instance of the Apostolical Management, and jurisdictional Actings, while in the Church of *Jerusalem*, is, their giving forth Orders for electing the Seven Deacons, and their formal Ordination of them by Imposition of Hands, and with Prayer, *Acts 6.* In this there is a clear Example of Parity, and joynt Course of Management. Is there any Thing in all this Part of Sacred History, to afford us the smallest Countenance to the Episcopal Scheme? or make us believe, that in this single Church there was but one Bishop, to whom the sole Power of Ordination and Government did belong? Here is a Bench of Apostles ordaining Deacons; they were not Bishops, that is, such an Order of Officers, of which there could be but *one in one single Church*; but Presbyters, acting in Parity, and with equal Power and Authority in that *one Church of Jerusalem.*

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The like Assembly or Ecclesiastical Synod was held at the Reception of *Paul* into the Fellowship of the Apostles, and Admission to be one of their Number *. And if we shall take a further View of the Constitution of this Church, it will appear, she had in her a Plurality of || Elders or standing Presbyters, no less than Deacons. Thus, before the Apostles left and finally departed from *Jerusalem*, we find, that they, and the Elders of that Church, assembled together in a judicative Capacity, with the Commissioners from *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, and very probably from the Churches of *Asia*, and in one Body enacted several Decrees, for the Good and Welfare of the several Churches concerned therein. And it is to be noticed, that the whole of what was transacted in this Synodical Meeting, was the Deed of all the Assembly, and there was an exact Parity observed in their Determinations; they were after much Reasoning, and, in the Issue, concluded by the Suffrage of all the Members. It is not to be learned from any Part of Sacred History, concerning this primitive Synod, that there was any Person among them; who pretended to have a Negative over the rest of the Members, or so much as attempted to use it. Now, can there be any more clear and convincing Pattern of real Parity among Church Pastors, than what was observed in this Assembly, in the whole of their Procedure? For, tho' the Apostles and others in that Synod, had an extraordinary Character; yet it is manifest to a Demonstration, they acted in the whole Matters before them, in an ordinary Way, and on a Level with the other Pastors and standing Church-

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officers

* Acts 9. 26, 27, 28. || Acts 11. 30.

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officers that were joyned with them. But of this enough, Chapter Second.

Again, we have a further Account of another Presbytery assembled at *Jerusalem*, without any Bishop lording it over them. It is said in the *Acts* (a), *And Paul went in with us unto James, and all the Elders were present*; where it is to be noted, that after he had informed them of what God had wrought among the *Gentiles* by his Ministry, it is immediately subjoyned, *And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Do therefore this that we say unto thee*. Now, can there be any Thing more manifest, than, that the Affairs of this single Church were carried on by a common Council and Bench of Presbyters? For, tho' what is here observed by the Sacred Historian is not properly a jurisdictional Deed; yet it was a Direction or Advice given by the Rulers of that Church to the Holy Apostle *Paul*, that he might escape the Rage and Fury of the *Jews*; and there is nothing more convincingly evident, than it was given by the joynt Voice, and in the Name of all the Meeting: *They glorified God, and said unto him*.

Now, when it is considered, that the Church of *Jerusalem* was the first constitute of any in the World, and was, for some Years, governed by the blessed Apostles, who were not Bishops in the modern Sense, but Presbyters, that is, such Officers, of which there were *more than one in one Church*, it is most reasonable to think, that it is the Will of God, that all Churches, in After-ages, should look on her Constitution as a standing Pattern and Example. Thus, from the whole, I observe,

I. That

(a) Chap. 21. 18, 19, 29.

1. That the Apostles acted the Part of Presbyters, and not of our modern Bishops, in the Church of *Jerusalem*: And so, by our Adversaries own *Axiom*, the first Christian Church was purely Presbyterian. Thus, when they plead, that their Bishops are the Successors of the Apostles, they must hold that which is inconsistent with, and subversive of their own Scheme and Model of Church Government. For, the Episcopalian Bishops are such an Order of Officers, of which there can be *but one in a single Church*; whereas, the Apostles were all of them together in the single Church of *Jerusalem*; and not only while they were the alone Pastors thereof, but after they had ordained others, they acted, in all Things relating to that Church, the Part of *Fellow Presbyters* with them, without assuming a Negative over these in their ordinary Managements. And, it is more than difficult for any Episcopalian to give but one single Instance from the Sacred Oracles, where ever an Apostle acted with a negative Power over Presbyters in any constitute Church, when they assembled with them about the Management of the ordinary and common Affairs thereof. For, as they acted by a common Council, while they were together in the single Church of *Jerusalem*; so, whenever any of them came afterwards to a City, where there was a constitute Church, they did not act therein by themselves, but in Conjunction with the Pastors and Rulers that were planted therein.

2. I cannot miss to observe further, that the Episcopalians act without Scripture Warrant, when they apply the Apostolical Commission, *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. only to their Bishops: This is insert in their *Ordinal* for these; but there is no Com-

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mission, so far as I can learn, alledged from the Sacred Oracles, in the Form of Ordination for Priests. The same Commission was insert in the *Ordinal* for both Bishops and Priests, in the Days of *Edward* the VI. But the Convocation, in the Year 1662. made a remarkable Alteration, while they insert the Commission, *Matth.* 28. in the *Ordinal* for Bishops, and took it out of that which belonged to their Priests, and so left that Order without any Divine Warrant. After all, how consistent this is with the Constitution of the *New Testament* Church, cannot miss to appear, while it is remembred, that the Apostles themselves, who were unquestionably possessed of all the Ministerial Powers, were not Bishops, but Presbyters, and consequently, Presbyters had a clearer Title unto it, than our modern Bishops, who are without Precedent in the Apostolical Writings. Besides, it will be a Matter of no small Difficulty, to give any satisfying Account from the Scriptures, that there is a Commission on Sacred Record for Presbyters distinct from Bishops; and if there be no distinct Warrant for these, it must be a plain Case, they are not a distinct Order of Officers. And, that which makes the Presbyterian Office, as it is confined by the Episcopalians, to be evidently a Novel Invention, appears from this, namely, that there is no Commission alledged for it, but one of their own inventing, which runs in these Words, *Be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of his Holy Sacraments, &c.* In a Word, either the Commission *Matth.* 28. belongs to Presbyters, or not? If it does, then they must have a Right to all the Powers contained therein, and which the Episcopalians plead to be in their Bishops by Vertue thereof;

thereof; for it is not in the Power of any to alter or restrict our Lord's Commission, any further than they are able to produce from the Sacred Oracles, or the Commission itself, a Part thereof, some Clause of Restriction, whereby the whole Powers contained therein, and of an ordinary and standing Nature, are to be made over to one Order of Officers, and a Part of these only to another. If it be said, that this Commission belongs only to their Bishops; then we desire they may produce a Divine Warrant or Commission for the Office of preaching Presbyters, as an inferior Order to Bishops, which, to this Day, they were never able to do, nor is it possible, from the Canonical Writings of the *New Testament*. Besides, it is a plain Case, the Apostles themselves, to whom that Commission was immediately given, were not Bishops in the modern Sense, but Presbyters, that is, according to their own *Axiom*, such Officers, of which there might be more than one in one Church; and consequently, from what hath been observed, the Office of Bishop, in their Sense, is a Stranger to the *New Testament* Constitution.

I know it will be objected, that *James* was constitute Bishop of *Jerusalem*, and was set over the Elders that were ordained in that Church; and for this there are adduced these pregnant Passages, *Acts* 12. 17. & 15. 19. & 21. 18. *Gal.* 1. 19. & 2. 9. 12. I must freely own, with the judicious Mr. *Jameson* *, that these Scriptures are Premises, that will by no Means bear the Conclusion that is alleged from them; and were they cast into the Form of a Syllogism, they would infallibly misken themselves, and betray the Cause for which they

* *Sum of Episcop. Controv.* Page 71.

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they are adduced as Proofs. But, each of these Scriptures being particularly consider'd by the Learned Author above mention'd, I shall only further observe, that it is already made good, *James* himself was not a Bishop, but a Presbyter, and consequently, not a Bishop over Presbyters. And it is desired, that the Episcopalians may allow us but one Scripture Instance, or suitable Proof, that ever *James* acted by himself, but in Conjunction with the Elders of *Jerusalem*, in any Part of the Government of that Church. This is the Point to be proved, if they will say any Thing to the Purpose; and till they make this evident, all that is said, is but a begging of the Question. Besides, before they insist on this Head, they ought first to be agreed among themselves, what *James* it was, that is said to have been Bishop of *Jerusalem*; for, in this Point, they are very far from being of one Mind; see *Append.* I shall only add, that the Elders of that Church, ordain'd by the Apostles, had, each of them, the Power of Jurisdiction; for the very Names by which they are express'd in the *New Testament*, according to their Use and Signification, both among Sacred and prophane Writers, import so much, as is made evident in many Instances, from what is to be seen on a former Head. Thus then, it is evident, that in the Church of *Jerusalem*, there was not a single ruling Bishop over preaching Presbyters, without which it had nothing of the Shew of an Episcopal Model, but all the Features of a Presbyterial Church. And, to use the Words of the Learned Bishop *Stillingfleet* (a), "The Episcopal Men will hardly find any Evidence in Scripture, or the Practice of the Apostles, for
" *Churches*

(a) *Iren. Part 2. Pag. 474. 476.*

“ Churches consisting of many fixed Congregations for
 “ Worship, under the Charge of one Person ; nor, in
 “ the primitive Church, for the Ordination of a
 “ Bishop, without the preceeding Election of the Cler-
 “ gy, and, at least, the Consent and Approbation of
 “ the People : And neither in Scripture, nor Anti-
 “ quity, the least Footstep of a Delegation of
 “ Church Power.”

As to Pretences from Antiquity, so much relied
 on by the Episcopalians, it is not at present my
 Business to make much Inquiry that Way ; for it
 is a Matter beyond Question, that if the Writings
 of the *New Testament* do not determine the *jus Di-*
vinum of the Constitution of the Church of Christ,
 it can never be made up by the fallible Writings
 of after Ages. I conclude this Head with the
 Words of the above cited Author, very expresse to
 our present Purpose ; (b) “ In Jerusalem, say they,
 “ James the Brother of our Lord was made Bishop
 “ by the Apostles : But whence doth that appear ?
 “ It is said from *Hegesippus* in *Eusebius* : But what
 “ if he say no such Thing ? His Words are these,
 “ διαδέχεται τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ μετὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων, which
 “ is there interpreted, *Ecclesiæ administrationem*
 “ *und cum cæteris Apostolis suscepit.* And no more
 “ is thereby meant, but that this James, who is
 “ by the Ancients conceived to be only a Disci-
 “ ple before, is now taken into a higher Charge,
 “ and invested in a Power of governing the Church,
 “ as the Apostles were. His Power, it is plain,
 “ was of the same Nature with that of the Apostles
 “ themselves ; and who will go about to degrade
 “ them so much, as to reduce them to the Office
 “ of ordinary Bishops ? James in probability did
 “ exercise his Apostleship the most at Jerusalem,
 “ where,

(b) Ubi Sup. Pag. 312.

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“ where, by the Scriptures, we find him *Resi-*
 “ *dent*; and from hence the Church afterwards,
 “ because of his not travelling abroad as the other
 “ Apostles did, according to the Language of their
 “ own Times, they fixed the Title of Bishop up-
 “ on him”. This much from a learned Episcopal
 Bishop is sufficient; and so we proceed.

S E C T. IV.

*That the Church of Antioch consisting of several
 Congregations meeting for Publick Worship, proved
 from the Multitudes of Christians, Jews and
 Gentiles in that populous City, and the Number of
 Pastors therein. That these several Congregations
 were under the Government of Church Officers
 ruling in Parity.*

HAVING, at some length, given an Account of
 the Constitution of the Church of Jerusalem,
 we come next to take a View of that of *Antioch*.
 This was once a famous City of *Asia*, and capital
 of *Syria*, built on both sides of the River *Orontes*,
 Twelve Miles from the *Mediterranean*, and Twenty
 from *Scanderoon*. *Josephus* (c) says, that this City,
 For Brightness and other Advantages, had without
 Controversy, the third Place in all the World subject
 to the Romans.

Now that we may come to a distinct View of
 the Constitution of this famous Church, I shall
 handle these two Things separately: 1. I shall
 shew that it consisted of more Congregations than
 one. 2. That all these were under the Govern-
 ment

(c) De Bello Jud. 3. 3.

ment of the common Council of Presbyters that were therein.

As to the first ; That this Church was made up of more Congregations than one, will appear from the vast Number of Christians that were in that City. After the Persecution of *Stephen*, (a) *These who were scattered abroad*, went down to *Antioch*, and spoke unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus, and the Hand of the Lord was with them : And a great Number believed and turned to the Lord. But this is not all ; for it is observed by the Sacred Historian, that by the preaching of *Barnabas*, much People were added to the Lord. *Barnabas* was sent to them by the Church of *Jerusalem*, and he no sooner perceived the great Increase of their Numbers, than he went down to *Tarsus* to seek *Saul*, and when he had found him, he brought him to *Antioch*. And it came to pass that for a whole Year they assembled themselves with the Church, and taught much People ; by which it appears, there was a further Addition made unto the former Accounts. And indeed, the Consideration of *Paul* and *Barnabas's* continuing together in that populous City, for the space of a whole Year, might be allowed as a sufficient Argument of that Church's being so Numerous, as that there were in it more Congregations than one. And it is not easily to be conceived, that this Church being so remarkably famous, as to give the Name of *Christians* to all others in the World, that at the same Time it was but one single Congregation. That there was a competent Number of Christians in *Antioch* to make up a compleat Congregation, when the Tidings of there being a Church there came up to *Jerusalem*, and occasioned their sending of *Barnabas*

(a) Acts 11. 19, 20, 21.

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bas unto them, is not to be doubted: And that he and *Paul* continued there a whole Year thereafter, labouring with Success, without increasing that Number, or making more Assemblies of Disciples than one, is not in the least credible; considering the Energy of preaching that was bestowed on the Apostles, and the signal down-pouring of the Spirit that was at that Time.

And it is worth Notice, that *Chrysostom* (a) computes the Number of Inhabitants in this City, to be Two hundred Thousand in the Time of *Ignatius*, which was soon after the Apostles. From this we may have some View of this Church, if it was possible for it to convene in one House or small Oratory; seeing *Tertullian*, who lived in the second Century, says expressly, when writing to the persecuting *Scapula*, (b) That the Christians then were well nigh the greater Part of every City. I must freely own, allowing something of an Hyperbole to this Phrase, which is usual enough with Orators, I see nothing in the Testimony, that has any Thing in it, but what is consistent with the Scripture Account of this Church, and the *Emphasis* of the Phrases by which its Numbers are expressed. But certain it is, that tho' its Numbers were vastly inferior to what this Testimony makes them to be; they must far exceed the Compass of one Congregation. Thus I leave it to the sober Thoughts of every judicious Christian, if the Church of *Antioch* could all assemble in one single House or Place for publick Worship.

Again, that which serves to remove the smallest Remains of Doubt, of there being several Congregations in the Church of *Antioch*, is the Multi-

(a) *Dr. Cave* on the Life of *Ignat.* Pag. 101. (b) *Tanta hominum multitudo, penè major cujusque civitatis.* Ad *Scap.* Ch. 2. Pag. 86.

Multitude of *Prophets* and *Teachers* that were therein. For, after the Dispersion of the *Jewish* Teachers at *Jerusalem*, divers of them preach'd the Gospel at *Antioch*, Acts 11. 20. Now, according to the *Idiom* of the *Greek* Language, the smallest Number that can be constructed to have come unto this City at first, must be Three or Four; for otherwise, they could not be said to be Men of *Cyprus* and *Cyrene*, in the plural Number. To these the Church of *Jerusalem* sent *Barnabas*; and he, after finding the Greatness of the Work, that he, and the rest that were before him, might be supported therein, made it his Business to bring up *Paul* from *Tarsus*, which makes up the Number of Five or Six, at the lowest Computation. But this is not all; for, after this, we find, *there came Prophets from Jerusalem to Antioch* *, which must unquestionably have increas'd their Number to Nine or Ten: And after this, besides *Barnabas* and *Paul*, there are Three other Teachers expressly mentioned, *Simon called Niger*, *Lucius of Cyrene*, and *Manaen* †. Now, that *Barnabas* and *Paul*, had a good Number besides themselves, all at Work in this Church, is a Matter beyond Dispute; seeing it is said, *Acts* 15. 35. *Paul and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the Word of the Lord, with many others also*, among which, *Silas* and *John Mark* were a Part †. From the whole of what has been said, Is it credible, that *Paul* and *Barnabas*, with the many others that were with them, assembled all the Christians, that, by this Time, were in *Antioch*, in any one House, and that ordinarily, for the Space of a whole Year, to perform the several Parts of publick

* Acts 11. 22, 26, &c. † Acts 13. 1, 2, 3. † Acts 15. 37, 40.

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lick Worship? As I formerly have observed, there were as yet no Temples, or large Edifices that were capable to contain any large Body of People for the publick Service of God; all that the Christians could arrive at, during the Apostolical Age, and for some considerable Time after, was only some private Houses to assemble in; of which, none will be easily perswaded, any one was able to receive the whole Body of Christians that were in *Antioch*. Besides, what was the Need for *Paul* and *Barnabas* to continue a whole Year at *Antioch*, when that Church was provided of many other Officers, if all their Work was only the Care of one single Congregation; especially, considering their extensive Charge, and the Commission they had for preaching the Gospel in other Places? It is a Matter more than difficult, to reconcile so great a Number of Church-officers their continuing with one single Congregation, and preaching by Turns to one Assembly of Christians; with the Wisdom of Christ, who enured his Disciples to go *Two by Two*, for the more expeditious Accomplishment of the Design of their Mission. Thus, I leave it to every impartial Considerer, to judge, if the Church of *Antioch* was but one single Congregation; or if so great a Number of Prophets and Teachers, together with *Paul* and *Barnabas*, could all be busied in teaching one single Assembly of Christians, lying within the Compass of one City.

All I find objected to what I have said on this Head, by the fresh Writer before mentioned, is in Page 16. He says, *Paul and Barnabas assembled a whole Year with the Church*, Acts 11. 26. and Acts 14. 26, 27. *When they returned to Antioch--They gathered the Church together*. And, Acts 15. 30. *When they*

they had gathered the Multitude together, they delivered the Epistle. This is all I find he advances for a Proof, that the Church of *Antioch* was but one single Congregation; and a very pitiful Pretence it is, seeing the whole goes on the Supposition, that the Word *Church* is always to be understood of a single Congregation of Christians, which is a very handsome begging of the Question. It is not disputed, that a Church planted by the Apostles in any remarkable City was still denominate *the Church* in the singular Number; but, that each of these single Churches was but one single Congregation, is the Question: And therefore, our Author ought to have made it good, that this Notion of a Church was to be understood in the Texts adduced by him, before he had taken it for granted; and till he does this, he says nothing to the Purpose. The Arguments advanced on the other Side, are submitted to the Examination of the judicious Considerer; but our Author seems to think, there is no more needful to make good what he has embraced, but the Word *Church* in the singular Number. Who doubts, but *Paul* and *Barnabas* assembled a whole Year with the Church of *Antioch*? But will this say, they assembled all in one House or Place for publick Worship? By no Means. For it is evident from what hath been said, that their being a whole Year with this Church is to be understood in a distributive Sense; and so, *Judas* and *Silas* their calling the Multitude together, and delivering the Epistle to them, must be understood after the same Manner. And indeed, it is no unusual Thing in Scripture, for collective Nouns, such as *Church*, *Synagogue*, or the like, to be taken distributively, and not collectively, as it all exprest by these Names assembled

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bled together in one numerical Place of Meeting. Thus, when the Apostle James * says, *If there come unto your Assembly a Man with a golden Ring*, it must undeniably be understood in a distributive, or separate Sense; unless it shall be supposed, that the whole Body of the dispersed Jews, to whom that Epistle is indited, had but one Church Assembly, or Place of Meeting, which was impossible. And so, when the Apostle Paul only mentions Church-assembling, and says, *¶ Not forsaking the assembling of your selves together, as the Manner of some is*; will it thence follow, that all the Hebrews to whom that Epistle was indited, were but one Congregation for publick Worship? Nay, the Word *Synagogue*, in its ordinary Signification, denotes a Congregation or Assembly, much more than the Word *Church*, which is variously taken; and yet even it is taken, in Sacred Writ, in a distributive Sense, as is manifest from *Matth. 13. 54. And when he was come into his own Country, he taught them in their Synagogue*, ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ αὐτοῦ. Here it must undeniably be taken in the Sense we plead, unless it shall be, contrary to all Truth, maintain'd, that our Lord only taught in *one Synagogue* in his own Country; whereas it is manifest, he taught in many *Synagogues*, in different Places, and at different Times, and one after another. Thus, the present Text is explained, *Luke 4. 44. And he was preaching in the Synagogues of Galilee. And Matth. 9. 35. He went about all Towns and Villages, teaching in their Synagogues. And John 18. 54. I ever taught in the Synagogues, and daily in the Temple.* Now, what is more plain, than that the Word *Synagogue* in the

* James 2. 2. ¶ Heb. 10. 25. συναγωγῇ

the singular Number must be understood distributively, for many Synagogues, in different Places, in which our Lord preach'd at different Times, as Occasion did require. Besides, both the Word *Synagogue* and *Church*, are undeniably to be understood in this Sense, *Exod. 12. 6.* For, when *Moses* gave Directions about the *Paschal Lamb*, he says, *And ye shall keep it up till the fourteenth Day of the same Month, and the whole * Church of the Congregation of Israel shall kill it between the two Evenings.* Now, is there any Thing more manifest, than that the Word *Church* must be taken in a distributive Sense? For, it is a plain Case, that all the Children of *Israel* did not assemble in one Place for the killing of the Lamb: This was to be performed in the *House of their Fathers*, a *Lamb for a House* (a). And here, it is further observable, that *House* is put for *Houses*; and so it is rendered in the *Greek*: For, this being before the Children of *Israel* came forth out of *Egypt*, there was neither *Priest* nor *Temple* among them as yet; which makes it clear, the Lamb was slain by every Head of a Family: And so, both *House*, *Church* and *Synagogue*, are to be understood in a distributive Sense, and not collectively, as if all this was to be performed in one individual Assembly or Place of Meeting. Had our *Author* duly adverted to these, and other Instances that will cast up afterwards, he might have saved himself the Trouble of Writing, and others of answering such pitiful Stuff, in stead of Arguments.

As for the other Scripture adduced by our *Author*, namely, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* returned to
C c 2 *Antioch*

* *And Arius Montanus renders it, Omnis Cetus Synagoga Iherosolymitana.*
el. (a) *Exod. 12. 5.*

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Antioch, and gathered the Church together, it is no more to the Purpose, than these already mentioned. For, tho' it were granted to him, that this was to be understood of the Assembly of Disciples, it is as inconclusive as the other two Texts already discussed. But, to speak my Mind plainly, I take the Church here, for the Church representative, tho' it should be disobliging to our Author: And I shall give him this Reason for it, namely, that as it was the Presbytery of *Antioch*, that sent them forth by the Imposition of Hands and with Prayer, at the Command of Heaven; so the Church that was gathered together, and to which *Paul* and *Barnabas* rehearsed all that God had done with them, must be the same Persons. It was not the ordinary Disciples or Believers of *Antioch* that sent forth *Paul* and *Barnabas*; but the Rulers of that Church, and consequently, there is as little Reason for any Man to alledge, that it was any other but these to whom they made Report of their Success. It is not easy to conceive, that Commissioners should report their Fidelity and Diligence, or the Success of their Embassy, to any but those by whom they were sent. And indeed, considering the Persons that were sent forth on this great Errand, and how careful they were to give an Account of their Diligence and Success on their Return, it seems plainly to speak forth a Pattern and Example to future Ages, of the Accountableness of Church-officers to the Class or Presbytery, by whom they are sent forth on any Expedition for advancing the great Ends of the Gospel. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were Persons of an extraordinary Character; and if it had not been for a Pattern to After-ages, what need was there for their making an Account of themselves to

to the Presbytery or Church of *Antioch*? And here, I wish our Author would consider, and give but one clear Scripture Instance, that ever any Person or Persons were authoritatively sent or commissioned by the Community of Believers or private Christians, to preach the Gospel, or go forth on any particular Embassy, for accomplishing the great Ends thereof. If this were a Doctrine established by the *Apostles*, then all that was necessary for them, was to have preached the Gospel, converted the People to the Faith of Christ, and as soon as this was accomplished, to have told them, their Work with them was ended, *Ye may now elect and ordain your own Officers, this is a Work incumbent on you.* But I submit it to the Consideration of the judicious, if this be the Doctrine of the Apostles; or what Ground there is to alledge, that the Church to which *Paul* and *Barnabas* made a Report of their Success, was that of private believers.

The *Second Thing* that falls under Consideration, for clearing up the Constitution of the Church of *Antioch*, is, to enquire whether the several Congregations therein, were under the Government of *one Person*, or a *Plurality* in one Class or Presbytery. The last of these is what we maintain, as being expressly determined in the Writings of the *New Testament*, from whence alone, the Divine Constitution of the Gospel Church can be learn'd. The Power of *Ordination* in this Church, and consequently, that of *Government*, by the Acknowledgement of our Adversaries, was in the Hands of a *Plurality* of Prophets and Teachers; for it is said, *Acts* 13. 1, 2, 3. *Now there were in the Church which was at Antioch, certain Prophets and Teachers; as Barnabas and Simon*

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that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen---and Saul. And as they ministred to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the Work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away. This I call Ordination; and so the Separation of Paul and Barnabas, is understood by many Orthodox Divines. And, tho' Dr. Whibby takes it only for a temporary Mission, which they made an End of, as he thinks from what is said, *Acts* 14. 26. And thence they sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the Grace of God, for the Work which they fulfilled; yet, I do not believe, that ὁ ἐπαγγελισμὸς, will bear the Strefs that is laid upon it, and say that they had made a full End of the Work which was laid on them by the Imposition of Hands; for it may as justly be rendred, The Work which they fully or faithfully performed. Thus, the Original Word is rendered, *Rom.* 15. 19. So that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully, that is, faithfully, preach'd the Gospel of Christ. And *Col.* 1. 25. I am made a Minister according to the Dispensation of God, which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God. Besides, it is not natural to imagine, that Paul and Barnabas supposed with themselves, that they had wholly finished the Work that was laid upon them, and to which they were recommended, even in Relation to these Churches and Places where they had preach'd the Gospel: For the contrary seems to appear from *Acts* 15. 36. So then, I see nothing in this Reason, to make any one think that this was not a proper Ministerial Ordination. I indeed own, that Paul was an Apostle, not of Men, nor by Men, but

but by *Jesus Christ*; and some conclude *Barnabas* was one also; and this was sufficient to their doing the Work of an Apostle, tho' the *Imposition of Hands* had never been conferred on them; yet, considering they were publickly to preach the Gospel to the *Gentile* World, and break down the middle Wall of Partition, which had hitherto remained between these and the *Jews*; there might be good Reasons for their subjecting themselves to a Ministerial Ordination: For, as they were about to go unto the *Gentiles*, and be Ministers of the Uncircumcision, *their being missioned by Divine Appointment*, by the laying on of Hands at *Antioch*, where there were Prophets come down from *Jerusalem*, which was look'd upon as the Mother Church, served not only to make them more acceptable to these to whom they were sent; but also set forth, that they being thus ordain'd themselves in a Ministerial Way, this Method of Ordination was to be observed in planting Churches among the *Gentiles*, and setting apart Persons to the Holy Ministry in all future Ages. This gave no new Commission to *Paul* and *Barnabas*; for all that the Action performed by these Prophets and Teachers at *Antioch*, imported, was the making Investiture of the same Commission to them in a Ministerial Way, which is all that is done in Ordination, for answering certain Ends.

But not to stay on this, there is nothing more exprefs from Sacred Writ, than that as there were a Plurality of Church-officers at *Antioch*; so they acted in a joynt Course and Presbyterial Way, in the Separation of *Paul* and *Barnabas* unto the Work whereunto God had called them. The Divine Will, made known by the Holy Ghost, for

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this Separation, was unto all of them in common; *Separate ye me Barnabas and Saul*; and in Obedience thereto, all of them concurred in the Action; and *they*, the Presbyters, *laid their Hands on them, and sent them away*. From all which, is there any Thing more convincingly evident, than that there was a Plurality of Rulers in the Church of *Antioch*, all joyntly exercis'd in this jurisdictional Act of Ordination? Or, is there the finallest *Innuendo* of this Church's being under the sole Government of a single Person or Bishop, from what appears from the History of the *Acts*? I doubt much, if there can be any Thing more exprefs for a Presbyterial Course of Management, than this remarkable Instance.

After all, tho' it should be granted, that this was only a Temporary Mission, or Separation unto the Exercise of their Office among the *Gentiles*; yet the Argument is of unanswerable Force on our Side. For, if God himself ordered a temporary Mission to be given by a Plurality of Pastors in one Church, all acting in Parity, and with equal Power and Authority, is it not most reasonable to conclude, that a Mission that is not temporary, but for the whole Life, should rather be conferr'd in this Manner? And what serves our present Purpose, is, that there were more Officers than one, in this Church, at the same Time; and that all of them, joyntly, in a *Class* or *Presbytery*, laid on Hands, and separate *Paul* and *Barnabas* unto the Work whereunto God had called them. And one must reasonably think, that such as were, by Divine Appointment, warranted to lay on Hands on Apostles, are much more impowered to do this in the Ordination of Ordinary Ministers. From the whole we conclude, that the Power of Jurisdiction

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on in the Church of *Antioch* was not in the Hands of a *Diocesan Bishop*, of which Sort there can be but one in one single Church; but, according to the infallible Oracles, it belong'd to a *College of Pastors* or *Rulers*, all acting in Parity, and with equal Power and Authority.

Dr. *Hammond*, to get rid of this Argument, after his usual Method, makes the *Prophets* and *Teachers* at *Antioch* to be the *Bishops of the Churches of Syria of that Age*. And to this, he adds, that they were commanded of the *Holy Ghost* to ordain and consecrate *Barnabas* and *Paul* to the *Apostleship*, to which God had design'd them. But the Extravagancy of this Conceit is sufficiently expos'd by the Learned Dr. *Whitby* on the Place. His Words are, "To say, that either *Paul* or *Barnabas* were Bishops of Syria, as Dr. *Hammond* doth, is that which never was before, nor can, with any Reason, be asserted of the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, or of *Barnabas*, appointed to go with him to the *Gentiles*, Verse 2. Nor could he have had any Temptation to have made the other three, there named, Bishops, but that he finds them laying on Hands, Verse 2. imagining that was for Ordination, whereas it was by Way of Benediction on their Enterprize, or Recommending them to the Grace of God, Chap. 14. 26. For, who ever heard before of an Apostle ordain'd Bishop, by laying on of Hands of the *Prophets* and *Teachers*? Or, of one *Prophet*, *Teacher* or *Bishop*, laying his Hands on another *Prophet*, *Bishop*, or *Teacher*, to ordain him Bishop! And indeed, if there were so many Bishops as he hath given us in *Judea*, Acts 15. in *Syria* and *Cilicia*, here, and so many ordain'd in all other Churches, as he saith, Chap. 14. 23. Is it not wonderful, that St. *Paul*,

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“ in all his Travels, should never meet with, re-
 “ fort to, or be entertain’d by any one of them,
 “ but only by the Brethren at large ! or, that he
 “ should write to the Churches of the *Romans, Co-*
 “ *rinthians, Galatians, Colossians* and *Thessalonians*,
 “ before he went to *Rome*, and never salute any
 “ Bishops there, or give any Instructions to them,
 “ or so much as ever mention that he had ordain’d
 “ any Elders, that is, saith he [*Hammond*,] Bi-
 “ shops there ? *Grotius* says, That these *Prophets*
 “ and *Teachers* belong’d to the Church of *Antioch*.”
 I shall only add, that these *Prophets* and *Teachers*
 were, for a long Time, in that Church ; and we
 have no Account of their Removal ; and this is
 sufficient for our Assertion, That the Church of
Antioch, on the very first making up of its Consti-
 tution, was governed by a Presbytery or Ecclesia-
 stical Court, made up of Prophets and Teachers,
 all acting in Parity ; which is such a View of that
 Apostolical Church, as is sufficient to look the Epi-
 scopal Scheme of Government out of Countenance.
 And what is a Confirmation of the whole, and
 a further Discovery of the Constitution of this
 Church, it is to be remembred, that on the Dispu-
 tation that fell out at *Antioch* about the false Tea-
 chers, who were for having Circumcision and the
 Law of *Moses* strictly observed by the *Gentiles*, the
 Commissioners sent to the Apostles and Elders at
Jerusalem were not missioned by a single Person
 or Prelate, but by the Presbytery of that Church ;
 and they determined, that Paul and Barnabas, and
 certain others of them, should go up to *Jerusalem* a-
 bout this Question. It is a Matter already establi-
 shed, That all jurisdictional Power in the Church of
 Christ, is lodged in the Hands of those who are in
 Office ; and consequently, the authoritative Missi-
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on of *Paul* and *Barnabas* was from such ; not from a single Person or Bishop, but the Presbytery ; seeing the Mission does not run *he*, but *they* determined. And indeed, it is not to be wondred, that Sacred Writ is silent as to the Notion of our modern Bishops, of which there *can be but one in one single Church* ; it being a plain Case, that the Apostles themselves were not such Kind of Officers, as has been already evinced at great Length. Besides, shall it be in Reason imagin'd, that *Paul* and *Barnabas*, being Persons of an extraordinary Character, and yet subject to the Determination of the Presbytery of *Antioch*, there should arise, after them, Church Rulers, that were raised above their Station by a Divine Commission, and not subject to the Bench of Presbyters, or Ecclesiastick Senate ? It would require a very clear and unexceptionable Proof, to establish such an Order of Church Officers.

As to the pretended Succession of Bishops in this Church, it is ridiculous and *Talmudical*. For, in the *first Place*, it is void of any solid Foundation, That ever the Apostle *Peter* was Bishop of *Antioch*. As this is without all Countenance from Scripture ; so it is contrary to all the Notions of an *Apostle*, strictly so called, as is owned by the most Learned and Judicious of the Episcopalians. And it is observed by the Learned *Stillingsfleet* *, how precarious, nay, contradictory, the Sentiments of the Ancient are, as to his pretended Successors. “ At *Antioch*, says he, some, as *Origen* and *Eusebius*, make *Ignatius* to succeed *Peter*. *Jerom* makes him the third Bishop, and places *Euodias* before him. Others therefore, to salve that, make them cotemporary Bishops, the one of the “ Church

* *Irenicon*, Pages 321, 322.

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“ Church of the *Jews*, the other of the *Gentiles* :
 “ With what Congruity to their *Hypothesis* of a
 “ single Bishop and Deacons placed in every City,
 “ I know not : But that *Salvo* hath been discussed
 “ before.” The same Author says, † “ In the first
 “ primitive Church, the Presbyters all acted in
 “ common for the Welfare of the Church, and
 “ either did, or might ordain others to the same
 “ Authority with themselves ; because the intrin-
 “ sical Power of Order is equal in them, and in
 “ those who were after appointed Governors over
 “ Presbyters. It being likewise fully acknowled-
 “ ged by the Schoolmen, that Bishops are not
 “ superior above Presbyters, as to the Power of
 “ Order.” Thus, I pass from the Church of *Antioch*.

S E C T. V.

The same proved of the Church of Ephesus ; and the Allegation of Timothy's being Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus's of Crete, answered.

WE come, next, to the Church of *Ephesus*. This City was one of the most ancient in the lesser *Asia* ; it is situate in the Province of *Ionia* on the Shore of the *Archipelago*, famous for the third General Council, and other smaller ones, and the great Temple of *Diana*. It lyes 40 Miles from *Smyrna*, to the South, and not 20 from *Miletus*, which was a Port-Town on the *Ægean* Sea, and on the Frontiers of *Caria*.

Now, in our Enquiry into the Constitution of this Apostolical Church, we shall observe the former

† *Voi supra*, Page 273.

mer Method. - 1. To shew, that there were more Congregations in her than one. 2. That all these were under the Government of a College or Presbytery, and not a single Person or Bishop.

As to the *First*. The Multiplicity of Converts that were at *Ephesus*, and their great Number, will make it evident, That there were in that Church several Congregations or Assemblies for Publick Worship. And, for clearing of this, it is observable, that the Apostle *Paul* continued at *Ephesus* more than the Space of two Years, which is a manifest Discovery of the Numerousness of that Church; for, it is not conceivable, that he who had the Care of all the Churches, and to whom a peculiar Energy of preaching was conferred, should have continued for so long a Time in a remarkably populous City, and under the Promise of great Success; and yet the Result of all to be no more, than one single Congregation, or such a Number as could meet in one private House or O-
ratory. Besides, during the Time of his Continuance there, it is remarked by the Inspired Historian, that *all that dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks*: And this they had the readier Access unto, in that the Temple of *Diana* being there, the City of *Ephesus* was the publick Place of their Worship, which occasion'd their frequent resorting thither. And if we take a View of the Fruits of the Apostle's Labours in *Ephesus* itself, it will appear, that in Consequence of his Miracles, * *Fear fell upon all the Jews and Greeks dwelling at Ephesus, and the Name of the Lord Jesus was magnified: And many of the Believers came and confessed and shewed their Deeds*: By which it appears, that there were more converted than

* Acts 19. 17, 18, 19, 20. & Ver. 24.

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than made this Confession. To this Account, let it be added, that many also of them that used curious Arts, brought their Books, and burned them before all Men, and they counted the Price of them, and found it Fifty thousand Pieces of Silver. So mightily grew the Word of God, and prevailed. Now, what must the Amount of all this be? Fear fell on all the Jews and Greeks; the Name of the Lord Jesus was magnified; many of the Believers came and confessed; and many of them that used curious Arts burnt their Books before all Men. Is it imaginable, that such a vast and populous City, so violently devoted to the great Goddess *Diana*, and intoxicated with the Love of their Inchantments and superstitious Devotions, would have suffered a publick and open Combustion of their Books so much had in Admiration, if the major Part, or, at least, a very remarkable and numerous Body of them, had not embraced the Christian Faith? This is so much the more remarkable, from what appears from the Fury of *Demetrius* and his Craftsmen, on their taking an Opportunity to raise a Mob of the Inconsiderate and Thoughtless, on the Back of this publick avouching of the Christian Faith, and Renunciation of Heathenism. And it is not to be imagined, but that *Demetrius* and his Accomplices would have been as ready to have oppos'd the publick Contempt that was cast on their great Goddess *Diana*, and old lucrative Customs, if they had been able, and durst made Head against it at that Time; whereas it was only the meaner Sort, under the Byass of Gain and Prejudice, that took an Opportunity to shew their Dislike, and raise a confused Mob in the City, being enraged that *Paul* had not only at *Ephesus*, but almost throughout all Asia, turned away much People to the Faith of Christ. And indeed,

indeed, considering the Computation and Amount of the Books, which, according to the Original, was reckon'd to be Fifty thousand Pieces of Silver, it must give us a manifest Discovery, that their Number was exceeding great, and those to whom they belonged, were a Body much more than what was competent to one single Congregation in those Days, when the Conveniencies for their Assemblies were but very small. Besides, at this Time it appears, that the Apostle had separated the Disciples from such as were hardned against the Kingdom of God; and it is evident from the Words of the Sacred Historian, that their Number was very considerable, even in their first Beginnings; for it is * said, *But when divers were hardned and believed not, but spoke Evil of that Way before the Multitude, he departed from them, and separated the Disciples, disputing daily in the School of one Tyrannus. And this he continued for the Space of two Years.* Now, considering all these Things, and that the Apostle expressly declares, || *A great Door and effectual was opened to him in that City,* is it to be dream'd, that the whole Number of Converts in that Place, during all the Time he was with them, amounted to no more than what was capable to, and actually did assemble in one Place for Publick Worship, or in such a Fabrick, as we may suppose the School of Tyrannus was! In a Word, if one shall take an unprejudiced View, how vastly populous the City of Ephesus was in those Days; of the great Resort that was made to it on the Account of Trade; the Famosness of the Temple of Diana, which is said to have been † 220 Years in Building, to which all the lesser Asia resorted, there being

* Acts 19. 9. 10. || 1 Cor. 16. 9. † Plin. L. 36. C. 14. Chrysof. in Prefat. ad Ephes.

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no other Religion among them; and that it abounded with Arts and Sciences, Philosophers and Orators, and was the Seat of the *Proconsul*; is it to be conceived, that the utmost the Apostle could make of it, after all the Accounts we have of the Numbers converted to Christ, could never exceed the Number of one Christian Assembly? And it is worth Notice, that Infinite Wisdom directed the Apostles to make their longest Stays in remarkable Cities, and to make the Offer of the Gospel in those Places where was the greatest Resort of People; such as *Jerusalem* and *Samaria* in the Land of *Judea*; *Antioch* in *Syria*; *Corinth* in *Grecia*; *Rome* in *Italy*; and *Ephesus* in the lesser *Asia*: But it must be most surprizing, if in all of these, the Success of the Apostles Labours must still be circumscrib'd within the Bounds of one Assembly or Congregation of Christians. Nay, I cannot reconcile with my self, the being but one single Congregation in *Ephesus*, during the whole Time the Apostle was with them, *with* their being safe from being overpower'd thro' the unmanageable Zeal of that People to their Goddess *Diana*, the superlative Regard they payed to her Temple; *or with* Demetrius's being so much enrag'd; if all the Apostle's Conquests amounted to no more but a single Congregation or Assembly. To satisfy the Mind of any impartial Considerer in this Matter, after the whole of what has been said, he cannot allow himself to imagine, but that there was a very considerable Part of this City become Christian, and that even of those who were of Consideration for Riches and Interest therein, before the Apostle took his *Farewel* of them and their Bishops, after three Years Stay in that Place. And all this does not come up to the forecited Testimony

testimony of *Tertullian* (a), who lived soon after the Apostles Days, when he says, The Christians in his Days, *were well nigh the greater Part of every City*. The common People, for ordinary, are Followers of those who are accounted the Learned and Wise in any City or Kingdom. And without we shall conceive that there was a numerous Body who had embraced the Apostle's Doctrine; it will not be easy to account, *how* that so barbarous a People, and a City so excessively given to Riot and Wickedness, that they banished *Harmoder* (b), merely because he was a sober and virtuous Man, *should* have tolerated the Apostle *Paul* for so long a Space of Time among them, and to teach a Doctrine so diametrically opposite to their Tempers and Dispositions.

Again, in the next Place, the Apostle *Paul* not only resided at *Ephesus* for the space of two Years and three Months, but by comparing the two Texts on the Margin (c) it will appear that first and last he was three Years in that Place; and besides, on his second coming to them, he found about twelve Disciples whom he baptized in the Name of the Lord *Jesus*. And when he laid Hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spoke with Tongues and prophesied (d). Thus the Apostle had a considerable Number of Hands at Work, besides himself. And considering that God bestowed on these Prophets the Gift of Tongues; it is very natural to think, there was a Diversity of Languages at *Ephesus*, which might be occasioned by reason of the great Resort that was made to that Place, on account of the remarkable Commerce that was there: And it is expressly said (e), there

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(a) Ad Scap. Ch. 2. Pag. 86. (b) Paul Bayn's Comm. on Eph. Ch. 1.
(c) Acts 8. 8. & 20. 31. (d) Acts 19. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

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were both *Jews* and *Greeks* there, who *heard the Word of the Lord*, and great fear fell on them all, and the Name of the Lord *Jesus* was magnified. And it is a Matter beyond Question, that the Gift of Tongues was not bestowed in the Apostolical Age, but for answering some End, and rendering Persons the more fit for carrying on the great Design of the Gospel; which in it self might be reckoned sufficient to determine us, that there were People of different Nations in *Ephesus*, and consequently various Dialects and Languages.

But it is further to be considered, that the Apostle had planted a Church at *Ephesus*, before he met with the twelve Disciples, at the Time of his first coming to that Place*. For it is not supposeable he should have been sometime there, reason'd with the *Jews* in their *Synagogue*, and departed from them after much intreaty to abide; and yet have left them altogether without Pastors. This was not his usual Practice in other Cities, and there is as little ground to reckon he did neglect it here. He left with them *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, and promised to return unto them, and so we find he made good his Promise, *Acts* 19. 1. And on his sending from *Miletus* for the Elders of that Church, *Acts* 20. 17. it appears that there was a constitute Church there, furnished with a Number of Ordinary and standing Presbyters; for in the 28. Ver. he requires them as Bishops, *To take heed unto themselves, and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them Overseers*. And in the subsequent Part of that Chapter, there is a further Discovery of the Multiplicity of the Rulers of that Church; for it is said, on his taking his Leave of them, *He kneeled down and prayed with them all, and*

* *Acts*. 18. 19.

and they all wept sore ; which implies, there was a considerable Number of them, which he had sent for to *Miletus*. These *Bishops* or *Elders* were fix'd Officers in that single Church, and so to them it was, he committed the Charge of that Flock. From all which it is evident, as any Thing can be, that there was a large Number of Pastors in the Church of *Ephesus*, if we shall reckon up the Apostle himself, who remained there for the space of three Years, the twelve Prophets, and the ordinary and fixed Bishops thereof. And to imagine all these to be employed about one single Congregation of Christians, were in itself ridiculous, and too injurious an Impeachment of the Blessed Apostle. For is it to be imagin'd, that he who was an Apostle, and charged with the *Care of all the Churches*, should remain so long a Time at *Ephesus*, while there was but one single Congregation in that City, and a numerous Presbytery of *Prophets* and *Bishops* to feed and govern them? Besides, it will not be easy to reconcile so great a multiplicity of other Officers in that Church, namely, of *Prophets* and *Bishops*, with so small a Number of *Disciples* as one single Congregation.

Thus then, from the whole of what hath been said, the great Number of Converts there appears to have been at *Ephesus*, the Multiplicity of *Prophets* and *Bishops* that were there, the diversity of Tongues that was bestowed on the former, and the Grounds we have to reckon there was a variety of Languages among that People ; it seems to be a Demonstration, there were in that famous Church, many particular Assemblies of Christians for publick Worship. There was then no large Temples nor Edifices, capable of containing huge Numbers of People ; the Christians assembled in the House

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of *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, 1 *Cor.* 16. 19, and the Apostle himself is said to have taught in the School of one *Tyrannus*, for the Space of two Years, after his coming to that Place the second Time: Shall we then imagine, that all the rest of the Prophets and Elders, were only employed in preaching to the first Assembly or Church, in the House of *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, and the Apostle alone in the latter, in the School of *Tyrannus*? This, itself, makes two Congregations in *Ephesus*, which, I'm fully satisfied, comes far short of their Number. A large Number of Officers or Pastors in any Church is still sufficient to determine the unprejudiced Mind, that there must be several distinct Charges or Congregations in that City, tho' there were nothing else to determine it; and this we have in several Apostolical Churches.

All I find advanced by our Author, to invalidate what I have said about the Church of *Ephesus*, has been once and again answered, for the whole of it is comprised in this, The Disciples in *Ephesus* are called *one Flock and Church* in the singular Number, Page 17. But what is all this to the Purpose? Are not all the Congregations or particular Assemblies of Christians in the World denominate *one Church* in the singular Number? And are not all the dispersed *Jews* throughout the different Provinces, of *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Asia*, and *Bitbynia*, expressly called *one Flock*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 1. compared with Chap. 4. Ver. 2.? These were antiently Provinces of the lesser *Asia*; and so, according to our Author's Way of Reasoning, it must have been something very like a National Church. For, that all these remote Places made up but one single Congregation for publick Worship, will not easily be received by the judicious and thinking

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Part of Mankind; and if there must be an unity in the Word *Flock*, it is much more natural to reckon it to consist in the whole Bodies communicating in those Things that fall under the Unity of Ecclesiastical Government and Jurisdiction. Besides, will our Author conclude, that because the twelve Tribes, which were scattered abroad, are exprest by the Name of *Church* in the singular Number; therefore they were but one single Assembly or Congregation of Christians? The Apostle *James* indites his Epistle to the *Twelve Tribes scattered abroad*, which were the same to whom the Apostle *Peter* indited his first Epistle; and in the 5. Chapter and 14. Verse, they are denominated the *Church*. *Is any Man Sick among you, that is, the twelve Tribes, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him.* Now, I would desire our Author would choose, whether this Church was a single Congregation or not? If it was, how could all the Disciples of the twelve Tribes, who were scattered abroad, come together for ordinary, to partake of Gospel Ordinances? If they were not, then it is manifest, to the Conviction of every unprejudiced Mind, the *Church* in the singular Number may be taken distributively, and contain many distinct and particular Assemblies for publick Worship: And this at once overturns all our Author endeavours to build, by the several Apostolical Churches being separately design'd the *Church* in the singular Number. Besides, the same scattered Tribes are design'd an Assembly in the singular Number; *Jam. 2. 2. If there come into your Assembly a Man with a gold Ring, in good Apparel.* Now, either this must be understood of a Christian Assembly for publick Worship; or for an Ecclesiastical Judicature, in Order to decide the

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Differences that might fall out between the converted of the twelve Tribes. If it be taken in the first Sense, our Point is gain'd, namely, that many particular Churches or Congregations of Christians are denominate Assembly in the singular Number, seeing *your Assembly* must undeniably have a Reference to the twelve Tribes, to whom the Epistle was indited. If it be taken in the second Sense, which is most eligible, then the Conclusion from our *Authors* Premises, or Notion of these collective Nouns, must be, that there was one Ecclesiastical Judicature, to which the twelve Tribes were subjected, for the Removal of all their Differences and mutual Offences.

The Words in the Original are, εἰς συναγωγὴν ὑμῶν, into your *Synagogue*. Now besides, that it is very rare, if ever, a Christian Assembly for publick Worship is exprest by *Synagogue*, but *Church*; so the Apostle expressly speaks of *Judging*, and of such *Respect of Persons*, as is condemn'd by the Law, Ver. 9. which is an *Acceptation of Persons in Judgment*, Lev. 19. 5. Therefore it is most reasonable to understand this *Synagogue* of an Assembly met in a Judicative Capacity. And this is the rather to be embraced, in that the Apostle seems to have an Allusion to the *Jewish* Practice, which the twelve Tribes were acquainted with: And it may be of Use to the clearing of the Text, what the learned *Thorndike** quotes from *Maimonides*; namely, *That it is expressly provided by the Jewish Constitution, that when a poor Man and a rich plead together, the rich shall not be bidden sit down, and the poor stand, or sit in a worse Place; but both must sit, or both stand.* This is a Circumstance which seems to have a clear Reference

* Of the Right of the Church in a Christian State, Edit. An. 1 49. Page 38, 39.

ference to what the Apostle here treats of; and considering he was writing to the *Jews*, with whom these Customs were familiar and well known, it seems to put the Matter beyond Doubt, that the *Assembly* spoken of, was an Ecclesiastical Judicature. Thus, there was an Assembly in which the twelve Tribes were concerned; and for the right Exercise of Justice therein, the Apostle gives them Directions, and lays before their Rulers the impartiality they were to observe in all Determinations, for the removing Offences. From the Whole, if *Church Assembly* or *Flock* must always be understood in Sacred Writ in a collective Sense, as our Author maintains, then he must inevitably be Presbyterian; for, as the twelve Tribes are called one *Flock*, *Church* and *Assembly* in the singular Number; so it must, beyond Question, have a Relation to their being under one Ecclesiastical Government, as the Center of their external Unity; seeing it was impossible for them to be all Members of one single worshipping Congregation. Thus I leave to the judicious Considerer, how much Judgment there is in his Observation, That there was one Flock, one Congregation, not many Flocks, not many Churches or Congregations, under the Oversight of the Presbytery of *Ephesus*.

The *second* Thing to be enquired into, in Order to clear up the Constitution of the Church of *Ephesus*, is, to make it appear, that the *several Congregations* in this Church were *not* under the sole Government of one Person or *Bishop*, but that of a common Council or Bench of *Presbyters*. There is a mighty Wrangle among the Episcopalians, to get rid of the glaring Evidence of Presbyterianial Form of Government,

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vernment, that ariseth from the Accounts we have of this Church, from the inspired Penman of the Apostolick Acts. Some of them must needs refuse the Identity of the Terms *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, as Bishop *Pearson*, than which nothing can be more contradictory to the Reasoning of the Penmen of the *New Testament*, and particularly the Evangelist *Luke*, in the 20. of *Acts* the 17. & 28. Verses compared together; for, from the 18. to the 29. Verse, the Apostle continues his Discourse to the *Elders* he had called and sent for from *Ephesus* to *Miletus*, and Verse 28. expressly designs them *Bishops*. This is confirm'd by Doctor *Whitby* on the Place, where among other Things he says, *This is plain from Irenæus, for he saith expressly, Having call'd the Bishops and Presbyters, he gave them Charge of the Church, in which the Spirit had made them Bishops.*

Again, there are others of the Episcopalians, who seeing the unreasonableness of this Advance, and its Contrariety to many Scriptures, run themselves into another extreme, and hold, that the Terms *Bishop* and *Presbyter* in this Place and every where else in the Apostolical Writings, denote a proper Bishop in the Episcopal Sense; and this Way goes Dr. *Hammond*, *Taylor*, *Burnet* and *Bull*. And, that these might act in a Consistency with themselves, and keep up the Honour of their own Axiom, of there being but *one Bishop in a Church*, they alledge, that the Bishops spoken of in this Text, were not these of the single Church of *Ephesus*, but of all the Churches of *Asia*. But, as it is a Thing not to be imagined, that the Bishops of all these Churches, some of them being at a great Distance from *Miletus*, could come so suddenly to the Apostle, he being in haste, and endeavouring

pouring, if it was possible for him to be at *Jerusalem* against the Day of *Pentecost*; so the *Syriack* Version renders the Words, *He sent from Miletus to Ephesus, and called the Elders of the Church of Ephesus*, which is an undeniable Proof of what we maintain. Besides, *the Church* in the singular Number, so far as I can observe, is no where in the *New Testament* made use of in *express Terms* to denote any more than the Christians in some City, except when the *Catholick Church* is meant. This I have formerly observ'd; and so there is no solid Foundation in Scripture of any Difference between a Church and the Christians of such a City; which is a clear Evidence that the *Elders* sent for to *Miletus*, were only these of *Ephesus*; for there is not the smallest Ground for taking it in a distributive Sense. Thus I conclude this Head, with the Words of Dr. *Whitby*, that *Chrysostom, Jerom, Theodoret, Oecumenius and Theophylact, knew nothing of St. Paul's sending to any Bishops, besides those of Ephesus: for otherwise, says he, they could not have agreed as they do from this Place, that these Persons could not be Bishops properly so called, because there could be but one Bishop in one City.* However contradictory this Assertion is in some Points to Sacred Writ; yet it makes good, that there were none sent for by the Apostle *Paul*, but the Elders of the single Church of *Ephesus*.

Again, there is a *third* Sort of Episcopalians, who in direct Opposition to both the former, maintain that the Terms *Bishop* and *Presbyter* in the *New Testament* are promiscuously used, but refuse them to be Bishops in a proper Sense, or such an Order of Officers as are vested with the Power of Ordination and Government. This Notion is

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embraced by Bishop *Hoadly*, Dr. *Whitby*, *Maurice*, and a fresh Writer Dr. *Brett*. But this is no less antiscriptural than either of the former Opinions, however much embraced at present by most of the Episcopal Party. This is manifest, in that not only the Name *Bishop* in the Original includes the Power of Rule and Government; but even that which is render'd *Presbyter* or *Elder* is made use of both by Sacred and prophane Authors to express the same Thing, as is observed at full Length, Chap. 2. §. 3. And, I cannot miss taking Notice, that our Translators have in this Place render'd the Word ἐπισκόπος *Overseers*, instead of *Bishops*, which is not to be met with any where else in the *New Testament*. And indeed, considering, that in the Time when our *Translation* was carried on, the Controversy about Church Government was very hot, the most of the Translators were Episcopal, and that these were not wanting to make good their Cause by the severest Methods; it renders it very suspicious it was done on Purpose and Design: For the translating it *Bishops*, would have sounded very harsh, and given no small Offence to Episcopal Ears; seeing, hereby it would have been made evident to every ordinary Reader, that there were moe Bishops than one in one Church, and that the Terms *Bishops* and *Presbyters* were exactly reciprocal, that is, every Bishop was a Presbyter, and a Presbyter a Bishop. But after all, when I reflect on what is said by Mr. *Prenn* in his *moderate and seasonable Apology for indulging Christian Liberty*, Pag. 2, 3. I'm inclined to think, the Fault is not altogether to be charg'd on the Translators, but on a certain zealous Bishop [*Andrews*] who had the last Perusal of their Labours, and was

was, not without Reason, thought to have made free with it in some Things, the better to support his own Notions.

But passing this, the Actions ascribed to the Elders or Bishops of *Ephesus* clearly point forth they were clothed with the Power of Jurisdiction, no less than dispensing Word and Sacraments. They were to *take heed to all the Flock, in which the Holy Ghost had made them Bishops, to feed the Church of God*, without the least Hint of a superior. Now, to be Bishops and feed the Church of God, says, in the strongest Terms, they were to govern and rule it. This much is included in the Expressions, and the natural Signification of the Original Words, as is already observed Chap. 2. §. 3.

Besides, it is worth Notice, that Rule and Government is expressly ascribed to the Gospel Elders or Bishops. Thus, *1 Tim. 5. 17.* 'tis said, *The Elders that rule well, and labour in Word and Doctrine.* Now, if these Elders had had nothing to do, but only in Word and Doctrine; why is *ruling well* ascrib'd to them? Why are they said to have Honour on that Account, if they were not empowered to labour therein? And, why is it said, that he only is qualified to be a Bishop, who is capable to *rule and Govern his own Family*; and he that is not able for this, is accounted to be unfit to *be a Ruler in the Church of God*, if he was to have no Concern in the Government of Christ's House? There is nothing less than Prejudice, or something that has too much the Ascendent over Mortals, is able to resist such clear Scripture Evidence for the Gospel Elders having the Power of Jurisdiction and Discipline.

Again, the Bishops of *Ephesus*, having their Charge in the midst of many who were Infidels
and

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and Heathens; either they had the Power to receive in, and admit to be Members of their Church, such as made a Profession of Christ; or not? If they had not this in their Commission, then, a great *many*, who in Obedience to the Gospel Call, and it may be, from the Heart had embraced that Form of Doctrine delivered to them, and on that Account were Members of the Redeemer's Mystical Body, and among the Number of that Flock for which he had laid down his Life, *were* to be none of their Charge, nor they called to feed them; contrary to the express Design of the Apostle. But to say this, were too bare-faced. And therefore, if they had a Power to receive in such to the Bosom of the Visible Church, on the Conditions and Qualifications specified in the Gospel, and not to receive in any who were not thus endowed; they had the same Power to seclude and debar from the Privileges of the Church, and Society of the Disciples, such as should afterwards evidence themselves to be Enemies to the Truth, and obstinate Opposers of what they profess'd at their Admission. For, if the Privileges of the Christian Church are not absolute, but suspended till Persons come up to such Terms and Conditions as are prescrib'd in the Gospel, and it is only the Rulers of the Church that are empowered to judge of these Qualifications, as to external Membership; then, the same Rulers have a Power and official Right, to declare, and authoritatively pronounce such as are Contumacious, obstinate or heretical after their Admission, to have forfeited their Claim to these Privileges which belong to that Sacred Body, to which they were received, and thereupon bound to live up to the certain Terms and Conditions they

they made Profession of, and in their Entry subjected themselves unto. This Consequence must be manifest to every unprejudiced Considerer, unless it could be made good, that there is something *more* in determining a Person to have forfeited his Right to the Privileges of a Society, on his renouncing the Terms and Conditions of his Admission, than there is in finding a Person to have a Right unto these Privileges, on his making a Profession of, and engaging himself to subject unto these Terms and Conditions; which will not be very easy to conceive. And that which serves to confirm this, is, that the Church of *Corinth* actually had a Power to eject the incestuous Person, and their being Remiss herein, was that for which the Apostle severely reprov'd them; whereas, had not this been a Duty incumbent on them, before his writing to, and putting that Church in Mind of their Work and Business in such Cases, they had not been liable to a Censure, nor reprovable on Account of a Neglect. If this had not been a Power in them by Vertue of their Office, the Apostle would never have said, *And have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this Deed might be taken away from among you. And Do not ye judge them that are within?* 1 Cor. 5. 2, 12. compar'd with 2 Cor. 2. 6.

Besides, if the Office-bearers in the Church of *Ephesus* had not the Power of Jurisdiction and Discipline, how was it possible to obtemperate the Apostle's Exhortations given unto them; preserve their *Flock* as Overseers; and withstand the great Disorders and Confusions which were to arise among them after *Paul's* Departure, when *grievous Wolves* should enter in, and of themselves, or such as were Members of their own Body, rise up,
speaking

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Speak perverse Things, and draw away Disciples after them ? Nay, to what Purpose does the Holy Apostle forewarn them of these Things, and lay them down as Reasons and Arguments to excite them to Fidelity and Care in feeding that Flock ? if they were not capable of cutting off profanely scandalous, obstinate and heretical Persons, and otherwise use the Rod of Discipline, as it was most suited to preserve the Purity of Religion among them ; vindicate the Honour of Christ ; and, if possible, reclaim the Offenders, or such as were under the Delusions of a cunning Tempter. It were a Reflection on the Wisdom of the Redeemer, who was so much concern'd to have his Visible Body kept from Schism, to imagine he had not provided Ecclesiastical Remedies for all the Diseases of his Church, and suited to preserve her from Putrefaction and Corruption. And so, as the Apostle forewarns them, that *of Themselves*, that is, even of these who were in Office among them, there should Men *rise up, and speak perverse Things, and draw away Disciples after them* ; so, it is not to be imagin'd but they had a Power to proceed against these, and inflict a due Censure on them. And it is a receiv'd Principle among the Episcopalians, that the Power of Ordination and Government go together ; and they that are impowered to exercise the one, have the other also. Thus, it being manifest, that the Bishops of *Ephesus* had the Power of Government, they had that of Ordination also ; and so were capable to preserve a Succession of Persons in their Office ; and without this, they were not in a Condition to take Heed to, and provide for the Flock of God its being fed by Pastors, after their own Removal and Death. Now, the Reception of any Person into the Ministerial

sterial Communion, being no *less* on certain Terms and Conditions, *than* that of Heathens and Pagans, into Church Communion; namely, that they be *blameless, not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to Wine, &c.* It must be undeniable, that if any, after their Admission to the Ministry, or Ordination, should flinch from, reject or cast off all these Terms to which they subjected themselves, and discover their *Self-willedness, Unruliness*, walk disorderly, &c. and draw away Disciples after them, and thereby beget Schism and Division in the Church; the same Persons who made the Investiture of the Ministerial Powers to them, may declare them to have forfeited all Right to the Exercise thereof, and to the Privileges they were admitted unto on their Ordination. And it is impossible to conceive a Sacred Society, in which Order and Decency is to be preserv'd, and which ought to be kept pure from Schism, by those whom Christ gave as a Deed of Gift unto it for that End; without conceiving, at the same Time, that the Rulers thereof have the *same* Power to suspend or depose a Person from the Exercise of the Holy Ministry, on his renouncing the Terms of his Ordination, *that* they had to ordain him to the Ecclesiastical Function, on his Profession of these, and appearing to be endowed with the Qualifications of a Gospel Bishop. For, indeed, if it were otherwise, it must give us a surprising View of the Christian Church, namely, that the Rulers thereof had a Power to send forth Labourers into Christ's Vineyard, to labour for its Good, on their appearing to have the Endowments and Qualifications of faithful Labourers, and their Engagement to the Rules of the Gospel Church; and yet on their acting for the Detriment, Hurt and Destruction of that Sacred Body,

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Body, they had no Power to remedy this Evil, and put a Stop to what might prove ruining and destructive thereto. This is a Notion not to be admitted of any well-governed civil Society, and much less of that which is of a Sacred Nature, and circumscrib'd with the most beautiful and wholesome Rules, so well calculate for maintaining Order, Peace and Unity, and preventing Schism therein. Thus, the Bishops of *Ephesus*, as they had a Power to rule and govern that Church; so, to ordain Persons appearing to be duly qualified to the holy Ministry; and consequently, to suspend or depose therefrom such as should, after their being receiv'd into the Ministerial Communion, discover themselves to be Enemies to the Order, Peace and Unity of the Church, and renounce their Ministerial Engagements.

Thus, it is easy to perceive, that the Church of *Ephesus* had in her, at the same Time, more Bishops than one, and, that to them belonged the Power of Ordination and Government, no less than that of dispensing Word and Sacraments. In this she had all the Features and Resemblances of the Mother Church of *Jerusalem*, where the Apostles ruled with Parity, not for one, but several Years; which was the exact Pattern of Presbytery, and will be regarded in all future Ages, by all the sincere Lovers of Truth, and such as have a tender Regard for Apostolick Example and Precept in this Matter.

I shall conclude this Head with a Testimony or two from some Learned Episcopal Doctors; and the first is Dr. *Hammond*, who says in his Paraphrase on the Place*, *Look to your selves, and to these committed to your Trust, to rule and order all*
the

* Acts 20. 28.

the faithful Christians among you. This learned Doctor concludes as fully against Dr. *Whitby*, as Dr. *Whitby* did against Bishop *Pearson*. The next I shall mention; is Dr. *Stillingsfleet* †, who, in strong Terms, concludes against all of them in these Words. “ The second Thing we consider, is, the Persons authoriz’d to do it [Ordination] whom we may consider under a double Respect, before their Liberties were bound up by Compact among themselves, and after. First, Before they had restrain’d themselves of their own Liberty, then the General Rule among them for Ordination was, ----- Every one regularly ordain’d himself, had the Power of the Ordination of his Disciples, as *Maimonides* affirms. --- The same Distinction may be observed under the Gospel, in Reference to the fix’d Officers of the Church; for we may consider them in their first State and Period, as the Presbyters did rule the Churches in common, as *Jerom* tells us, *Communi Presbyterorum Consilio Ecclesiæ gubernabantur*: Before the Jurisdiction of Presbyters was restrained by mutual Consent, in this Instant doubtless, the Presbyters enjoy’d the same Liberty that the Presbyters among the *Jews* did, of ordaining other Presbyters by that Power they were invested in at their own Ordination: To which Purpose we shall only, at present; take Notice of the Confession of two *Canonists*, who are the highest among the Papists, for Defence of the distinct Order of Episcopacy. Yet *Gratian* himself confesseth, *Sacros ordines dicimus Diaconatum & Presbyteratum: hos quidem solos Ecclesia primitiva habuisse dicitur*. And *Joannes Semeca* in his Gloss upon the Canon Law;

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Dicunt

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“ *Dicunt quidē quōd in Ecclesiā primā primitivā*
 “ *commune erat officium Episcoporum & Sacerdotum,*
 “ *& nomina erant communia. ----- Sed in secundā*
 “ *primitivā cœperunt distingui & nomina & officia.*
 “ Here we have a Distinction of the Primitive
 “ Church, very agreeable both to the Opinion of
 “ *Jerom*, and the Matter we are now upon ; in
 “ the first Primitive Church, the Presbyters all
 “ acted in common for the Welfare of the Church,
 “ and either did or might ordain others to the
 “ same Authority with themselves ; because the
 “ intrinsical Power of Order is equally in them,
 “ and in those who were after appointed Governors
 “ over Presbyters. And the Collation of Orders
 “ doth come from the Power of Order, and not
 “ merely from the Power of Jurisdiction. It be-
 “ ing likewise fully acknowledged by the School-
 “ men, That Bishops are not superior above Pres-
 “ byters as to the Power of Order. ” Thus far the
 Doctor ; and much more might be transcrib’d from
 him, full to our Purpose. I shall only observe,
 That if the first Primitive Church was Presbyterian,
 we are not asham’d to follow her Pattern, nor
 will we lay her Constitution in Ballance with what
 might be afterwards ; for it is a plain Case, Infal-
 libility is never to be exchang’d with Fallibility.
 After all, if Truth is of such a Nature as will only
 admit of one Way of Defence, or must be main-
 tain’d by Arguments and Mediums that are not
 contradicting to, and subversive one of another ;
 then I leave it to the judicious Considerer to judge,
 How much of this appears in the Episcopal Scheme
 and Constitution of Church Government ; for, if
 all their different Models of the Apostolical Church
 will stand in a Consistency one with another, it will
 not

not be difficult to reconcile the two Ends of a Contradiction.

The grand Objection that is made against what has been said on the Constitution of this Church, is, that *Timothy* was Bishop of *Ephesus*. This Argument is fully exposed in the *Appendix*, where the different Sentiments of the Episcopalians about the Terms *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are at some length represented, and the Places, where their Minds are express'd, referred to. All I shall add in this Place shall be but short. That which is mainly insisted upon, is, That *Timothy* was Bishop of *Ephesus*, and *Titus* of *Crete*, and these had the sole Power of Ordination and Government in their respective Churches, and that this is the Reason why such particular Directions as that, 2 *Tim.* 2. 2. are given them, and they are called to ordain and look after the Qualifications of Persons to be ordain'd, receive Accusations against Elders, reject Hereticks, and rebuke Offenders, &c. From such Premises as these, they infer, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were superior to ordinary *Presbyters*, and consequently, they alone, and not these, had the Power of Ordination and Government. This being laid down, our modern Bishops lay claim to be the only Successors of these two remarkable Persons.

But, in Answer to this much talk'd of Argument, I shall offer these Things. 1. That it is readily granted, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were of a superior Character to ordinary Pastors or Elders; but then it must be observed, that wherein they were superior to them, they had no Successors; as has been abundantly made good in the first Chapter. It is a Matter beyond Question, that *Timothy* was an Evangelist; for, if he had not been so, it would have been as impertinent to have requir'd him to

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do the Work thereof, as it would have been for the Episcopalians to have demanded one of their common Presbyters to do the Work of a *Diocesan*. But of this there has been enough said on a former Occasion. And as to the inconsistent Shifts Dr. *Whitby* is brought into, in his Preface to the Epistle of *Titus*, when he acknowledges *Timothy* and *Titus* to have been *Evangelists*, and that, properly, they could not be *Bishops*, and yet, thereafter, makes such Inferences as plainly overturn his own Premises; they are fully and judiciously observed by the Learned Mr. *Jameson*, in his *Sum of the Episcopal Controversy*, Chap. 2.

2. As for their alledging, 1 *Tim.* 5. 19. *Against an Elder receive not an Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses*, as an Argument of a Bishop's being Judge of Presbyters, and their Superior, 'tis ridiculous, and as inconclusive, as to alledge, that because *Timothy* is exhorted to *preach the Word, be instant in Season and out of Season, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and Doctrine*, therefore he was to do this alone, and none of the Presbyters were concern'd therein with him. It is easy to perceive what Sort of Arguments these would make, if cast into the Dress of a Syllogism. Besides, how would this Way of Reasoning be received by the Episcopalians, if it should be applied to another Example; namely, our Lord said unto *Peter*, *I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, &c.* Therefore the Power of the Keys belonged to *Peter*, and not the rest of the *Apostles*. This Way of argumenting by the Papists in Favours of the Pope, is equally good with that of the Episcopalians in Favours of *Bishops*; and if the one conclude against the *Protestants*,

testants, then the other will against the *Presbyterians*.

3. As for their alledging that *Timothy* was fix'd Bishop of *Ephesus*, from the Apostle's Words, *As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other Doctrine*, 'tis of as little Service to their Cause; for it is so far from concluding that which is design'd, that it seems to point forth, that the Evangelist's Stay in that Place was only temporary, to do what was by the Apostle enjoin'd; but not that he was to have that City for the Place of his fix'd Residence, and the Care only of that Church; which is contrary to Fact and Truth, as has been before observ'd.

4. It is not in any Measure clear, that *Timothy* was at *Ephesus*, when the two Epistles were written unto him; for, tho' our Translation would appear to give some Countenance to it, at the Writing of the first Epistle, when it is said, *As I besought thee to abide at Ephesus*, and then it is added by Way of Supplement, Verse 4. *so do*; yet it must be considered, that these Words are not in the Original: And tho' they were, the utmost that could be inferr'd, is, That the Apostle had renewed his Exhortation to him, to charge Men that they taught no other Doctrine, on all Occasions and Opportunities, wherever he was. And so Dr. *Whitby* paraphrases the Words, *Unto Timothy my own Son in the Faith*, (do I wish) *Grace, Mercy and Peace from God the Father*, ---- (declaring that) *as I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia*, (*Acts 20. 1.* so I did it to this End) *that thou mightest charge some* (Judaizers there) *to teach no other Doctrine* (than that which is according to Godliness, Chap. 6. 3.) And the same Lear-

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ned Doctor, in his *Preface* to this Epistle, says,
 “ St. Paul saith plainly in this Epistle, that he
 “ purposed to come to him ; but he saith not, that
 “ he purposed to come to him at *Ephesus*. If you
 “ reply, That in his Epistle he commands him to
 “ stay at *Ephesus*, and so must be supposed to speak
 “ of coming thither to him, Chap. 1. 3. This, I
 “ confess, is true, according to our Version, which
 “ adds unto the Words, *So do* ; but if you read
 “ the Words thus, As I exhorted thee to abide
 “ [some Time] at *Ephesus*, when I went into
 “ *Macedonia*, (so I did it) that thou mightest ad-
 “ monish some to teach no other Doctrine ; it will
 “ be left uncertain whether he were at *Ephesus* at
 “ the Inditing of this Epistle ; for then, having
 “ done the Work for which he was bid to stay at
 “ *Ephesus*, he might go on to other Places, doing
 “ the Work of an *Evangelist*. ” The same Author
 adds, “ It is certain, that this first Epistle was
 “ written to him, that, in St. Paul’s Absence, he
 “ might know how to deport himself in the Church
 “ of God, especially in Reference to the Prescrip-
 “ tions here laid down, Chap. 3: 15. Now, there
 “ was little Need that he should stay to do the
 “ great Work prescrib’d in the Epistle, touching
 “ Bishops and Deacons, they being settled among
 “ them by St. Paul himself, before he left *Ephes-*
 “ *us*, and they being after, in his Journey to *Je-*
 “ *rusalem*, summoned to *Miletus*, and taught how
 “ to demean themselves in the respective Provin-
 “ ces committed to their Trust : It is therefore
 “ highly probable, that these Directions were gi-
 “ ven him, in Reference to some other Churches
 “ to which this *Evangelist* was to travel, and in
 “ some of which he might then be. ” And as to
 the 2d Epistle, he says, on Chap. 4. 12. “ Hence
 “ it

“ it is evident, That *Timothy*, at the Writing of
 “ this Epistle, was not at *Ephesus*: For, if so, why
 “ should the Apostle advertise him, that he had
 “ sent *Tychicus* thither? ” This much the Doctor.
 I shall only add, If there were Bishops ordain’d in
 the Church of *Ephesus*, before *Timothy* was set over
 them, what became of them afterwards? Were
 they degraded without a Crime? And, if they
 were still there, then there were still more Bishops
 than one in that Church. And if the Apostles
 themselves were such an Order of Officers, of
 which there could be more than one in one single
 Church, and acted in Conjunction with the Elders
 in the Church of *Jerusalem* in Matters of Jurisdic-
 tion and Discipline, as has been already made
 good; then it is not to be dream’d, that the Evan-
 gelists *Timothy* and *Titus* were of a more raised or
 higher Order, or such Officers, of which there
 could be but one in one single Church. But there
 has been enough said on this Head; the Reader
 will see more in the First Chapter, and in the *Ap-
 pendix*. And indeed, the Argument is such as ma-
 ny of the more learned Episcopalians are asham’d
 of; and, at best, it is borrowed from the Jesuite
*Turian** and *Bellarmino*, and was long since, as
 the most of the rest, consecrate in the Jesuite’s
 School, and has an equal Tendency to support a
Papish Prelacy, with that of the Episcopalians in
 our Day. See *James Owen’s Script. Ordin.*

* *Turian*, Sophist. inter *Sadcl. Oper. C. 2. Pag. 598.*

S E C T. VI.

*The same proved of the Church of Corinth; and
1 Cor. 5. 4, 5, largely vindicated.*

WE come next to the Church of *Corinth*. This was once a very famous City, but now in a ruinous State; it lies in the *Morea*, and was once subject to the *Venetians*, by whom it was taken, *Anno* 1687. but now is under the *Turks*, who made themselves Masters of it in 1715. It stands on the *Isthmus*, 54 Miles West of *Athens*, and 43 West of *Thebes*. Now, in speaking to the Constitution of this Church, I shall observe the former Method, and *first* take Notice, that there were several Congregations therein; and *then* make it appear, that all these were under the Government of a Class or Presbytery. And,

1. That there were in this Church several Congregations, will appear from the Number of Disciples that were therein. And it is observable to this Purpose, That on the Apostle *Paul* his first Coming to that Place, by one Sermon, and that in the House of *Justus*, Acts 18. 7, 8. *Crispus the Chief Ruler of the Synagogue believed on the Lord, and all his House, and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptised.* Here is a Person of Distinction, with his Family, which must be conceived to be numerous, considering his Character, all converted to the Faith of Christ, with many of the *Corinthians*. Immediately on the Back of this, we find the Lord comforts the Holy Apostle against the Obstinacy of the *Jews*, who opposed themselves and blasphemed, by letting him know, That however the Contempt of his Brethren
and

and Kinsfolk, according to the Flesh, might discourage his Spirit; yet he was to have an amazing Success in this City, by the Conversion of the *Gentiles*: *Then spoke the Lord to Paul in the Night by a Vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy Peace: For I am with thee, and no Man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much People in this City, Acts 18. 9, 10.* Thus, it is easy to perceive, that besides those already converted, the Apostle had the Mind of his great Master, that there was *much People* yet to be brought in; these were to be a Balance, and bear Proportion to the *Jews* who rejected the Counsel of God against themselves; which must unquestionably determine, that the Success of the Apostle in that populous City, was far to exceed the Bounds of one single Congregation. For it is not easy to conceive, that considering the vast Number of *Jews* in that City, such an Handful of Converts, as could assemble in one Congregation at that Time, would have been sufficient to have rais'd the Holy Apostle above that Dejection of Spirit he labour'd under for the Obstinacy of the *Hebrews*, who were so dear unto him, and for whose Sakes he would have undergone so much. And considering he continued *a Year and six Months at Corinth, preaching the Word of God among them*; it is most natural to believe, that the Success of his Labours under so rich Encouragement, far exceeded the Number that could assemble in any private House or small Oratory, which is all they could have Access unto in those Days. And it is worthy of Notice, that *Tertullian* ascribes the Name of Church to two or three, *Ubi duo aut tres sunt, ibi est Ecclesia*. And it is plain, that in the Apostolical Age, and for some considerable Time thereafter, the Places of publick Worship were both
small

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small and retir'd; and not such as afterwards obtain'd in the Days of *Constantine*. Thus, considering the Energy of the Apostle's Preaching; the Time of his constant Continuance in that populous City; the Encouragement he had from God of great Success; the Smallness of the Places they ordinarily had for assembling in, even in the Time of Peace; it must, at once, make us conceive there were many Assemblies for Publick Worship at *Corinth*.

Besides, the Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism by the Apostle, was only to *Crispus* and *Gaius*, and *the Household of Stephanas**. Now it being said That *they that believed were baptized*, must unquestionably say that this Ordinance was dispensed to them by some other Person than he, and consequently in some other Assembly where the Apostle was not preaching; unless we should suppose, he declin'd to perform this Part of the Ministerial Function to any save these already mentioned, and that he sat by as a Spectator when it was performed by any other Pastor, which is not in the least credible. Is it not much more reasonable to conceive that the Apostle gave himself wholly to the preaching of the Word, to which he says he was sent, that he might daily add Numbers to the Church from among these that were yet unconverted among the *Jews* and *Heathens*; and that he had committed the Baptism of these to the other Pastors and Ministers which he had ordain'd in that City, or others of his Assistants, in their different Assemblies, according as their Numbers increased? This is so much the rather to be embrac'd, in that we find there was a Multitude of *Pastors* and *Teachers* in the Church of *Corinth*. For,

as

* 1 Cor. i. 14, 15, 16.

as the Apostle was the † Master-Builder of that famous Church, and continued there for the space of Eighteen Months; so it is manifest, there were many Co-workers with him, all contributing their Share in carrying on that great Work. This is plainly included in his taxing those *Corinthians* who made Profession of the Faith, for their Schism and Division, arising from the different Affections that were among them, to their several Teachers. Were there not some in this Church, who doted on one Pastor, some on another, and others on a Third? Does not the Apostle say, *Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ?* This clearly intimates they had a Plurality of Teachers, and each of these his Followers and Admirers. And tho' the Apostle's Words are Hyperbolical, when he says, *Tho' you have Ten thousand Instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many Fathers;* yet the Phrase includes they had great Store of Teachers among them. And that there was a great Number with them, appears from the Multiplicity of Prophets that were there, to whom the Apostle gives Directions for maintaining of Order, Decency and Regularity in their publick Assemblies: *Let the Prophets speak Two or Three, and let the other judge. --- And the Spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets,* 1 Cor. 14. 29, 31. Now, if there was in this Church a stated Order to be observ'd, and two or three Prophets were only to Preach at a Time, and that by Turns, and the rest to judge, and the Spirits of the Prophets to be subject to the rest; then we may reasonably conclude their Number was very considerable; seeing a Plurality preaching supposed a greater Number to be Judges, unless

† 1 Cor. 3. 10. & 4. 15.

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less we should imagine the greater Party was judged by the smaller, contrary to all Form, and the Nature of the Thing. And tho' these *Prophets* had an extraordinary Character; yet they acted the Part of ordinary Pastors to that Church; and the Rules given them, for their decent and orderly managing the Affairs and religious Concerns thereof, are of a binding Nature, and every Way agree to ordinary Ministers in all future Ages. Now, to suppose such a vast Number of Officers in the Church of *Corinth*, all to be employed about one single Congregation of Christians, and that such remarkable Gifts were bestowed on them, to be more frequently employed in hearing than preaching, which on such a Supposition must infallibly have been the Case, is in its self ridiculous, and inconsistent with the remarkable down-pouring of the Holy Ghost, that was in those Days. Besides, this would have a very different Aspect from what our Lord enured his Disciples unto in the Days of his Flesh; when he sent them forth *Two and Two*, that each of them might find Work, and none be without Business answering to his Station. And to conceive that our Blessed Lord *had much People in Corinth*, and a great many Labourers in the Work of the Ministry; and yet still but one Congregation, assembling in some upper Room or Family, is in it self unreasonable. And, as is observed by the Learned *Rutherford (a)*, the Apostle's Words seem clearly to give us a quite other View of Things, and his saying, *You may all prophesie one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted*, must say, *this was to be performed by Course, and in divers or several Assemblies.*

Again

(a) Due Right of Presbytery, Pag. 461.

Again, it must be consider'd, that there were a Diversity of Tongues and Dialects in this Church; and for the right using of these, it was enjoyned, that if any spoke in an unknown Tongue, it was to be by two or at most Three, and that by Course, and another was to interpret. 1 Cor. 14. Now, if we shall take a Review of the Multitude of Teachers that were in Corinth, and that these were endued with the Gifts of Tongues, working Miracles, and healing Diseases, and yet all but one Congregation, it were very strange. Was the only End of these for the Edification of one Assembly of Christians? Or, how could the End of Edification by a Diversity of Tongues be obtained, if all the Disciples and others in that City had but one Language? Nay, in that Case, what was their Usefulness? For, tho' it be said, *Tongues are for a Sign to them that believe not*; yet it will not follow, that this was only for the gaining of Heathens to the Faith, and had no Relation to the Edification of these who were already converted, and of different Languages. The contrary of this is manifest from the Context; for otherwise, how comes it, that the Apostle says, except they speak to those who were acquainted with their Language, or there be an Interpreter, they were as Barbarians to those to whom they uttered themselves, and the Hearers as *Barbarians* to them? Besides, if they were not for the Edification of the Church, to what End were they to pray, *they might interpret*? Does not the Apostle expressly declare, that he who spoke with Tongues, if he was not understood, it was fruitless to others, by Reason the Hearers could not say *Amen* to his Preaching, or immediate Address to God in Prayer? He that does not instruct others by his Language in Preaching

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ching, is but unprofitable to the Church; and strange Tongues, in the Apostle's Account, were so far from being profitable to the Hearers, if not understood, that they were rather the Judgment of God upon them. Thus, the Apostle's Scope, *1 Cor. 14.* was to rectify the Abuse of Tongues, and shew how they were to be used for the Edification of the Church; and this, I cannot help thinking, still supposed, there were different Tongues among the Hearers of the Gospel; for no Gift is bestowed, but where it may be useful to Edification.

Now, from the whole, considering the great Number of Teachers there was in *Corinth*, the Diversity of Languages wherewith they were endued, and the Regulations the Apostle laid upon them, by which they were restricted to *Two or Three* at most, at one Assembly; it seems plainly to say, that these Pastors, to whom the Apostle says, *That all might prophesie one by one, that all might learn, and all be comforted*, behov'd to perform their Office in different Places, by Course, and to different Assemblies: For, it is not easy to believe, they could all do it successively to one single Assembly, so as *the Infidel should be convinced of all, and judged of all*. Will Two or Three Prophets be counted all the Prophets that were in *Corinth*? Or, will their Numbers, being restricted to Two or Three, that were to prophesie to one Assembly, stand in a Consistency with all the Prophets of that Church their prophesying one by one, unless it was in different Places, and to different Assemblies? The due Consideration of * that Chapter without Prejudice, renders it beyond Exception, that the Church of

Corinth

* *1 Cor. 14.*

Corinth consisted of several distinct Congregations or Assemblies for Publick Worship; and what the Apostle says in the 34 Verse, is a further Confirmation thereof; *Let your Women keep Silence in your Churches.* It is not said, *Let Women*, but *your Women* keep Silence; which properly cannot be understood of other Churches, than what were in the single Church of *Corinth*, nor of their different Assemblies at different Times, but of the several distinct Meetings, which, for ordinary, met at the same Time in distinct Places. For as it is not an usual Way of speaking, to term different Meetings of the same Body of People at different Times, by the Name of *Churches*; so, if we may give Credit to the Testimony of *Tertullian* before mentioned, the Thing in itself was impracticable, that all the Christians could assemble in one Place for Worship at the same Time; seeing, according to his Account, the Christians were so numerous in the second Century, that they *were well nigh the greater Part of every City.* This Testimony is general, and had a Respect to every City where Christianity was planted by the Apostles; and so, if it be compared with what has been already said, allowing the Difference of Time, we may still believe, there were even more Congregations in *Corinth* in the first Age of the Christian World than one. I shall only add, that it plainly appears from *Rom. 16. 23.* that *Gaius* whom the Apostle calls his Host, entertained a Church or Congregation in his own House; and tho' *Origen* * in his Commentary on the Text, says, *He was a hospitable Man, who did not only receive Paul, and every*

* Videtur indicare de eo (Gaio) quod Vir fuit hospitalis, quod non solum populum; ac singulos quosque diversantes Corinthi, hospitio receperit, sed Ecclesie universae in domo sua Conventiculum ipse praebuerit.

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ry particular Christian into his House ; but afforded also in his House a Meeting-place to the whole Church, Yet this cannot be all the Christians in Corinth, whose Numbers appear vastly to exceed what could be accomodate in one private House or Lodging, if the one Half, nay, the fourth Part of the City had been Christians, which is much within the Number which *Tertullian* reckon'd to be in every City, In a Word, it must be surprising, that if a single Congregation was so essential to a Church, that however Populous any City was where the Apostles came, they could never exceed the number of Ten or Twelve hundred Persons at most to embrace the Christian Faith, which would be more than sufficient for any Accommodation an Assembly for publick Worship could obtain in that Age ; and that even in Defiance to the strongest Expressions in Sacred Writ, denoting the Success of the Apostles, and their remarkable Conquests, and the concurring Testimony of the succeeding Age, which is still to be admitted as an under Proof.

Here I cannot miss to observe what is objected by our Author against what has been said. His Reasoning on this Head is in Page 16. and the Sum of it is in the Apostle's Words, *When ye come together in the Church, I hear there are Divisions among you ---- When ye come together into one Place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper*, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20, 22. & 1 Cor. 14. 23. *If therefore the whole Church come together into one Place.* There is nothing in all this, but what hath been once and again considered ; for the whole lyes in these two Points, The Church of Corinth is but one Church in the singular Number, and the Disciples therein are said to come together into one Place, ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό. As to the first of these,
it

it were tedious to repete what hath been said on the Word Church, and the Import of such collective Nouns: Only let it be considered, That the fixing an Argument on such a Form of Speech, for their being but one single Congregation or Assembly of Christians at *Corinth*, is to impose on the common Sense of Mankind. Does the Apostle's saying, He *persecute the Church of God**, import that he persecuted one single Congregation of Christians? Nay, does it not plainly appear, that the Church of God persecuted by him contained in her many particular Churches and Congregations? seeing, it is manifest, he exercised this Cruelty not only in *Jerusalem*, but in other *strange Cities*, Acts 26. 11. And, after his Conversion, it is observed by the inspired Historian, Acts 9. 31. that *the Churches had Rest*. Shall we then conclude, that because the Disciples of *Corinth* are denominated the Church, therefore they were but one single Assembly of Christians, that met in the same numerical Place for Publick Worship? I'm hopeful, our *Author* will see the inconclusiveness of such an Argument on second Thoughts.

His Second Reason is no less inconclusive, namely, the Church *came together into one Place*. There has been enough said, as to the Import of these Words, and the Use of the Original Expression *ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ*. It is a received Maxim among the most judicious Criticks, that the Import of such neutral Words, must still be determined by something in the Context where they are used; and that the Phrase in particular made use of by the Apostle in this Place, has not so much a Reference to a *local Place*, as a *Thing* in general. Thus, the same Expression, Acts 3. 1. is translated by the

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Learned

* 1 Cor. 15. 9. Gal. 1. 13. Phil. 3. 6.

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Learned Grotius, *circa idem tempus*, about the same Time. And * Beza, in his Translation of the *New Testament*, gives this Paraphrase on it, *Acts* 2. 44. *And all that believed were together, that is, the common Assemblies of the Church, with their mutual Agreement in the same Doctrine, and the great Uniformity of their Hearts, were signified by it.* The same Sense is put upon these Words, *Psal.* 34. 3. *Let us magnify the Lord together.* For that which is translated by the *Septuagint*, ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, is render'd by *Aquila* the *Jew* ὁμοθυμαδόν, *with one Accord, or one Heart*, without the least Insinuation of any Place of Meeting. It were too tedious to multiply Authorities on this Head, considering what has been said before on these Words. I shall only add, that, at this Time, the Christians had no large and capacious Temples for their Assemblies; but only private Oratories or Houses, such as the House of *Mary* (a), an upper Room at *Troas* (b), the School of *Tyrannus* (c), *Paul's* Lodging at *Rome* (d), the House of *Aquila* and *Priscilla* (e), and of *Philemon* (f). This is the Scripture Account of the Places, in which the Primitive Christians assembled for the Participation of Gospel Ordinances; And I leave it to the Consideration of every serious Examiner, if it has the least Shew of Probability, that all the Christians in *Corinth* could meet together in one such Place of Assembly. It has ever been look'd upon as a fallible Way of Writing, to bottom the Weight of an Argument on a positive Interpretation of a single Phrase or Expression, which in its own Nature is indefinite, and must receive its determinate Sense from

* Ita communes Ecclesiæ cœtus significantur, cum mutuâ in eâdem doctrinarum consensione, et summâ animarum concordia. (a) *Acts* 12. 12. (b) *Acts* 19. 9. (c) *Acts* 20. 8. (d) *Acts* 28. 23. (e) *Rom.* 16. 5. 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. (f) *Col.* 4. 15. *Philem.* V. 2.

from something in the Context, where it is made use of. In a Word, it would be reasonably expected, that a very unexceptionable Proof should be adduced, to make one believe such an extraordinary Assertion, namely, *that*, after all the united Labours of the Holy Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, that were employed in the Morning of Christianity in the most remarkable Cities in the World, with the greatest Promises of Encouragement from Heaven, *they* could never arrive at more Congregations than one in any of these. This is a Position that would require more convincing Arguments than what I have yet seen, and seems to carry in it too much of an Inconsistency with the extraordinary down-pourings of the Holy Ghost in those Days.

The *Second* Thing to be consider'd, in order to clear up the Constitution of this Church, is, to make it appear, that the several Congregations therein, were not under the sole Government of one Person or Bishop; but that of a common Council or Bench of Presbyters. For clearing of this, let these Two Things be consider'd.

1. It is a Matter beyond Question, that there were in this Church a great Number of *Prophets*, whose Character was next unto the *Apostles*. That these were Persons in Office, is manifest from the Apostle's Gradation; 1 Cor. 12. 28. *God set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets: Are all Apostles, Are all Prophets?* And, I formerly observ'd, that the Name *Prophet*, both in the *Old* * and *New Testament*, always includes a Per-

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son

* Gen. 20. 7. Exod. 7. 1. Deut. 18. 20, 21. 1 Sam. 22. 5. 2 Sam. 7. 2. & 12. 25. & 24. 11. 1 Kings 1. 8, 10, 22, 23, 32, 34, 38, 44, 45, &c. 2 Kings 3. 5, -- 13. & 4. 12. & 9. 1. & 14. 25. & 19. 2. 2 Chron. 9. 29. &c. Matth. 1. 22. Luke 1. 76. John 1. 23. Acts 2. 16. & 7. 46. & 28. 25. Acts 2. 30. & 3. 22. Rev. 16. 13. Mark 6. 4. Luke 7. 15. 26, 39. John 4. 19. & 9. 17, &c.

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son in Office, and one endued with a Sacred Character. Now, tho' the Prophets which were in this Church had an extraordinary Character; yet it is undeniable, that they performed all these Parts of the Ministerial Work which belonged to ordinary Pastors and Teachers; and it is no less evident, that they were not Bishops but Presbyters, that is, such an Order of Officers, of which there were more than one in one single Church. This is undeniable from the Account we have of their Management in the Church of *Corinth*; seeing *the Spirits of the Prophets therein, were subject to the Prophets*. This is a Rule which must hold good in all Ages; for, if it was incumbent on those who had an extraordinary Character to be subject to their Brethren, and accountable to them; much more those who are but of an ordinary and standing Office in the Church. And here is one Thing must not escape, that both *Apostles* and *Prophets* were such an Order of Officers, as more of them than one were in one Church; and consequently, neither the one nor the other were Bishops, but Presbyters; which at once strikes at the Foundation of the Episcopal Scheme, namely, that there can be but *one Bishop in one Church*. It is a Matter not to be doubted, that either the primitive Apostles or Prophets were more capable to have taken upon them the sole Power of any Church where they came, and exercised the Government thereof singly by themselves, *than any that ever came after them*; yet, it does not appear from any Instance in the *New Testament*, that ever either of these took upon them to act in any constitute Church, but in Conjunction with the standing and ordinary Rulers thereof. This is evident to a Demonstration, from *Acts* 13. 1, 2, 3.

& 15. 1, 2, &c. Thus, from what already appears, we have a clear Plat-form of a Presbyterial Church; there is not the least Insinuation of any fix'd Bishop that was there, to whom the sole Power of Jurisdiction and Government was committed, but of many Officers acting in Parity, and with equal Power and Authority.

But before I leave this Head; if any shall object, That if the Prophets in this Church had an extraordinary Character, and were under the infallible Influence of the Divine Spirit; then there was no need of their being subject to the Cognizance of their Brethren in what they delivered and taught: Yet it must be observed, that the Consequence is not good. For tho' they had the extraordinary Influences of the Divine Spirit; yet it will not follow, but that they might sometimes mix somewhat of their own with what they had received, or draw their own Inferences from infallible Truths revealed unto them. The Prophet *Elias* was under the extraordinary Influences of the Holy Ghost; yet the Conclusion he made that *he was left alone* to serve God, was his own and not the Lord's; for he is plainly told his Mistake in the particular Application of his Prophecy as to the Apostasy of *Israel*; and let know, that there were *Seven thousand in Israel which had not bowed their Knee unto Baal*, 1 Kings 19. 10, 18. And the Prophet who said unto Paul thro' the Spirit, *he should not go up to Jerusalem*, did indeed speak by the Spirit of Prophecy in fortelling Paul's Danger in that City; but the Inference he made was his own, when he said he should not go up, and not the Dictate of the Spirit, tho' he was ready to charge it on him; and Paul expressly refuses to comply with that Part of it, and lets him know

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that he was raised above the Fears of the most severe Treatment he could meet with from the Hands of Men, in bearing a Testimony to the Truth. I shall only add further, the Words of the *English* Annotations on 1 Cor. 14. 32. " That
 " altho' those Prophets were inspired by the Holy
 " Ghost that cannot err; yet all Things are not
 " always revealed to one, and that which is re-
 " vealed to one, is oftentimes revealed to more,
 " and sometimes in a clearer Manner. There might
 " be also something mingled with that which Pro-
 " phets revealed, and it might fall out that that
 " which they added of their own, by Way of
 " Confirmation, Illustration or Amplification,
 " must be justly subject to Censure whether it
 " might be tryed and judged by others, whether
 " the Prophecies proceeded from the Inspiration of
 " the Holy Ghost, and according to the Rule of
 " Faith, *Isa.* 8. 20. " In a Word, Persons be-
 ing required to examine what was delivered to
 them by the Rule of God's Word, and to be on
 their guard against false Prophets, necessarily im-
 plies that Prophets were subject to Examination in
 what they delivered, and particularly, that *the*
Spirits of the Prophets were subject to the Prophets.

2. A second Consideration for clearing the Con-
 stitution of this Church, is, That there were in her
 several Presbyters or ordinary Pastors, who had
 the Inspection of the several Congregations there-
 in. It is not to be imagin'd the Apostle made so
 long a stay in that City, was so Instrumental in
 turning so many in that Place to Christ; and yet
 not, according to his usual Method in other Places,
 constitute them a Senate or Presbytery. This one
 Consideration leaves no room to Doubt, but that
 there were ordinary Pastors and Teachers in *Co-*
rinth,

rinth, which joyned with the Prophets in the Management of the Affairs of that Church, as well as at *Antioch*. Besides, the Apostle expressly requires, that the Disciples at *Corinth* should submit themselves to such as had *addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints*, 1 Cor. 16. 15, 16. and to every one that was assisting in carrying on the great Work of the Gospel, or laboured in the Ministerial Office. The *House of Stephanas* had given themselves to the *Work of the Ministry*, and the Apostle requires them to submit unto, honour and regard them, and all such as had given themselves to that honourable, but laborious Work and Office. This clearly points forth there was a standing Ministry at *Corinth*; and to them it was the Apostle immediately addresses himself, when he says, 1 Cor. 5. 4. *When ye are gathered together in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and my Spirit, deliver such an one unto Satan*. But for clearing of this, let it be consider'd, 1. That the Church of Christ is such a Society, as is distinct from these of the World, and the Admission of Persons unto it depends on certain Terms and Conditions, of which its Rulers are the only competent Judges. Every one who may be a Member of a civil Society or common Wealth, is not on that Account a Member of the Church of Christ; but his Admission thereunto, depends on his making *Profession* of, and subjecting himself unto such Conditions as the Gospel does require, and of *which* the Officers of the Church are the Judges, as to the fitness of the Person who is adult and come to the Years of Discretion. The Nature of the Redeemer's Kingdom, and the remarkable Privileges thereof, are such, as will not admit the *Heathenish* and *Infidel* World to be Members of it, till they profess their Faith

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in Christ, and engage to subject themselves to the Purity of his Laws. Now considering there are none to be admitted Members, but on the express Conditions and Qualifications specified in the Gospel Institution, it is equally reasonable, and the Nature and Privileges of that sacred Society do require it, that he who, after his Admission to be a Member of that Kingdom, shall act contumaciously, and cast dishonour thereon, is to be ejected, and authoritatively in the Name of Christ denounced to be an Enemy thereunto, and to have no Right to the Privileges thereof. This is evident as any Thing can be, from the remarkable Instance before us, of the incestuous Person in the Church of *Corinth*, who, on the Account of his scandalous Practices, and the heinousness of his Offence, was ejected from being a Member of that Sacred Body, and having a Right to its Privileges. And tho' the Holy Apostle interposed in that Matter, and commanded the delivering of this Person to Satan; yet the Grounds and Reasons wherefore this Power was exercised, still continue in the Church, it having its arise from the dishonour done to the Society, and was inflicted, to prevent the spreading of such Corruptions, and at the same Time for the Amendment and reclaiming of the Offender from the Snares of a cunning Tempter. And so, the Preservation of the Honour of Sacred Society, the preventing the Infection thereof by vicious and Heaven-daring Practices of any of its Members, and the reclaiming the Offender himself, being Things of an equal Duration with the Church of Christ, must always be of the same Necessity, and render this amazing Censure of a standing and continuing Nature in the House of God. And it is observable, that the Holy Apostle chides the *Corinthians*,

rinthians, that they had not been sensible of the great Dishonour done to that Church by such an Offence, and exercised the Ecclesiastical Rod for removing the Person from among them, lest by his Continuance the whole Lump should have been leavened. This is clear from the Apostle's Words, *And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that had done this Deed, might be taken away from among you.* Thus it is manifest, that whether the Apostle had interposed or not in this Matter, it was the Duty of that Church to have ejected the incestuous Person from among them; which says in the strongest Terms, they were vested with the Power of Ecclesiastical Censure. For it is not conceivable, the Apostle would have charged them with the Neglect of exercising that Power, if they had not been in the Possession of it.

2. As what hath been said, clearly evinceth, That the Sentence of Excommunication was not, nor can be the Province of the Civil Magistrate; the Christian Church, in its own Nature, being a distinct Body from that which is purely Civil, and vested with positive Laws and Institutions, *independent* thereon; so, it is no less true in it self, that the authoritative Deed of Excommunication is the proper Work of Church Rulers, and not that of private Christians. Thus, the Persons gathered together in the Name, and with the Power of the Lord Jesus Christ, were the Office-bearers in the Church of *Corinth*; for it was to them alone, that the Power of the Keys was committed. This was a Power which Christ gave for the Good of his Church in general, or in the *first* Place, for his Catholick and Visible Body; and then *secondarily*, for every particular Church, as they are Parts or Branches of the

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the whole: But the Subject in which this Power is reposed, for answering the great Ends of its Appointment, is the Rulers of the Church, who derive it, not from the Body of the People, but Christ himself, whose Ministers *and Stewards they are*. For, as I have formerly observed, the Moral Power of Jurisdiction in the Church of Christ, is not natural to any Person or Society of Men; but arises from the positive Institution of the Redeemer, in whom it is lodg'd radically and fundamentally *. This being its Original Fountain, the Way of its Communication must be by a positive Grant or Commission, which the Nature of Christ's Kingdom in this World, it being founded by positive Laws and Regulations, necessarily does require: And if it were otherwise, it were not possible to determine to whom the Exercise of this Power did belong, or who it was that had a just Title unto it. Thus, we find, that the Ministerial Powers were made over immediately unto the Apostles, in a Commission which was to continue to the End of the World; and the Method of its regular Investiture unto their ordinary Successors in all future Ages, is expressly determin'd by a positive Revelation, together with the Endowments and Qualifications of those who were to be clothed therewith. This is manifest from the several Scriptures † set down at the Foot. Now, the Apostles having their Commission immediately from Christ, which was to continue to the End of the World, for the conveying of all the standing and ordinary Parts of their Ministry, it must be evident to the Conviction of the Unprejudic'd, that
that

* Isai. 9. 6. Matth. 28. 18. † Matth. 16. 18, 19. & 18. 19, 20. & 28. 18, 19, 20. 2 Cor. 10. 8. & 13. 10. John 20. 23. Ephes. 4. 8, 11. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Acts 13. 2, 3. 1 Tim. 4. 14. & 3. 2, & 5. 22. Tit. 1. 5, &c.

that Office is not derived from the Body of Believers, or Professors of Christianity, but from the positive Institution and Commission of Christ, the *Lord and Head* of his own Church: And the Investiture of this Commission is as little from them, but from those who are in Office themselves, or by the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery. Remarkable to this Purpose are the Words of the Learned *Whitaker* †, *Successor habet jurisdictionem ab eo a quo prædecessor*, &c. that is, *A Successor hath Jurisdiction from him from whom the Predecessor had his*; otherwise he doth not truly succeed him. What I infer from the whole, is, That the Persons gathered together in the Name, or with the Authority, of the Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver the Incestuous Person to Satan, were the Rulers or Office-bearers of the Church of *Corinth*, and not the Community of the Faithful, as is maintain'd by some, nor a single Bishop, according to others, tho' in the strongest Terms contrary to the express Words of the inspired Apostle. As there can be nothing more opposite to the Episcopal Scheme than, that the highest Censure of the Church should be executed and denounced by a Plurality of Persons or Presbyters in any single Church, which was plainly the Case of that at *Corinth*; so, that Church having consisted of several Congregations, and the Power of Jurisdiction and Discipline being only the Province of Church Rulers, it is not to be dream'd, that the whole Multitude, or all the private Christians in *Corinth*, were assembled together for this End. Nay, the Apostle gives us a clear View, that it was not a Censure inflicted by all the Members of that Church, but of many, 2 Cor. 2. 6. which, undeniably has a Relation to the Numerousness

† De Pontif. Quest. 8. C 3.

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roufness of that Presbytery that passed the Sentence. And, as it was only these that had the Promise of * Christ's Presence and Countenance to be with them in the inflicting this Censure; so it was never the State of any Church, that the whole Multitude were endued with Qualifications in any Measure answerable to their exercising Rule and Government. Thus, tho' the Epistle was indited to the Church of *Corinth*; yet, from what is ascrib'd to those who were to assemble *together in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, it can only be meant of the Presbytery of Rulers that were set over that Church, and not of its private Members, whose Business it was to assemble for Acts of publick Worship, and not for these of Jurisdiction and Discipline. And if such a Restriction shall not be admitted in the present Case, it must necessarily infer manifold Absurdities and Solecisms in other Texts of Sacred Writ; particularly in the Epistle indited to the *Thessalonians*, it is said, *Esteem highly of those that are over you*, 1 Thes. 5. 12. Of whom is this said? Because that Epistle is indited to that Church, is it to be understood of every Member therein? If so, then they were commanded to have a high Esteem of themselves. If it was of their Officers or Rulers, which every sober Judgment will grant, then their Character as being over the Church, and having the Government thereof, is that which restricts the Meaning of the Text. I shall add another Instance among many others; the Apostle, in the Epistle to the *Corinthians*, says, *Ye may all prophesy one by one*, 1 Cor. 14. 31. Was this to be taken in the same Latitude with those to whom the Epistle was indited? Or, will it say, that all the Men and Women therein were to prophesy

* Matth. 28. 20.

phesy one by one? In a Word, would not this necessarily imply they were to submit to and honour themselves, when compared with 1 Cor. 16. 15, 16.? And so, when it is said, *The Spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets*, it must, in like Manner, be a Subjection to all the Men, Women and Children in that Church. And here I cannot miss to observe, for the Regard I bear to a fresh Writer, whose Principles I formerly consider'd, that the First Epistle indited to the *Corinthians*, is not only to these, but to *all the sanctified in Christ Jesus*, called to be Saints, *with all that in every Place call on the Name of Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. 1. 1, 2. Now, I leave it to the Consideration of the Judicious, if the General Rules laid down in this Epistle had only a Relation to a Congregation of Christians as such: Or, if they had not a direct and immediate Respect unto all the Assemblies of Christians in the World; seeing the Epistle is indited to these, no less than the Church of *Corinth*. This one Consideration is sufficient to let us see, that all the Rules for Decency, Order and Edification, mention'd in this Epistle, were of a Catholic Extent.

Thus, having at some Length considered the Meaning of that Text, 1 Cor. 5. 4. and made it appear, that the Sentence of Excommunication was pass'd against the Incestuous Person by the Presbytery of *Corinth*, who were gathered together in the Name of the *Lord Jesus Christ*; it makes it evident, there were ordinary and standing Rulers in that Church, no less than Prophets; and consequently the *Corinthians* were not under the Government of one single Pastor or Bishop, but of a whole Senate, acting in Parity, and with equal Power and Authority. Remarkable to this Purpose are the

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the Words of *Clemens Romanus*, in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*, Pag. 2, 3. *Only let the Flock of Christ enjoy its Peace, with the Presbyters which are set over it.* Here it is observable, that the most undoubted Piece of Antiquity which is extant, the Sacred Oracles excepted, has not the least Hint of any Order of Office-bearers set over the Church of *Corinth*, but only these of Presbyters; nor can I observe in any Branch of that Epistle, remaining, the least Countenance to the Episcopal Scheme, after the strictest Search I could make. I might adduce Abundance of other Passages from it, but, at present, shall content my self with the Sentiment of the Learned Dr. *Stillingsfleet*, very expresse to our present Purpose. His Words are, “Had Episcopacy been instituted on Occasion of the Schism at *Corinth*, certainly, of all Places, we should the soonest have heard of a Bishop at *Corinth* for the remedying of it; and yet, almost of all Places, those *Heralds* that derive the Succession of Bishops from the Apostles Times, are most plung’d whom to fix on at *Corinth*. And they that can find any one single Bishop at *Corinth*, at the Time when *Clemens* wrote his Epistle to them (about another Schism as great as the former, which certainly had not been according to their Opinion, if a Bishop had been there before) must have better Eyes and Judgment than the deservedly admired *Grotius*, who brings this in his Epistle to *Bignonius*, as an Argument of the undoubted Antiquity of that Epistle, That *Clement* no where mentions that peculiar Authority of Bishops, which, by the Custom of the Church after the Death of *Mark* at *Alexandria*, and by its Example in other Places, came to be introduced; but he clearly evinceth,

“ ceth, as did the Apostle *Paul*, that the Churches
 “ were governed by the common Council of Pres-
 “ byters, who are termed Bishops, both by *Paul*
 “ and *Clement*. What could be said with greater
 “ Freedom, than that there was no such Episcopa-
 “ cy then at *Corinth*? ” Thus far Dr. *Stillingfleet*,
Irenicon Page 208. I shall now leave the Church
 of *Corinth*, which some have endeavoured to in-
 volve with needless Difficulties, to get free of its
 glaring Evidence against Episcopacy, and its stand-
 ing Maxim, *There can be but one Bishop in one*
Church.

S E C T. VII.

*The same proved to have been the Original Constitu-
 tion of the Church of Rome.*

WE shall next enquire into the Constitution
 of the Church of *Rome*. This is a very an-
 cient and large City, and one of the most famous
 in the World; the *Metropolis* of *Italy*; and, for
 these many Ages, the Seat of the *Pope*. Now, tho’
 the Christians in this City are not termed by the
 Name of Church, as these of *Jerusalem*, *Antioch* and
Ephesus; yet the Tenor of the Epistle indited to
 them is the same with these written to particular
 Churches; and the most undoubted Piece of Anti-
 quity expressly bears, That the Christians in *Rome*
 were but one Church in the singular Number.
 Thus *Clemens Romanus*, in his genuine Epistle to
 the Church of *Corinth*, inscribes it, * *The Church of*
God

* Ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ παροικοῦσα Ῥώμην τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ τῆ-
 ροικοῦσῃ Κόρινθον. Clem. Rom. Epist. I. ad Cor.

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God which sojourns at Rome, to the Church which sojourns at Corinth.

Now, in our Enquiry into the Constitution of this Church, I shall observe the former Method, by shewing, *first*, That there were moe Congregations or Assemblies of Christians in her than one; and then, *secondly*, That all these were under the joynt Government of a Class or Presbytery. And,

I. That this Church had in her moe Congregations of Christians than one, may appear from the Epithets and Encomiums the Apostle passeth upon her, namely, that *her Faith was spoken of throughout the whole World*, and her Obedience was come abroad unto all Men, Rom. 1. 8. & 16. 19. Is it to be imagin'd, that one single Congregation in Rome, would have made such an Appearance in the World, and been so remarkably taken Notice of? *Tertullian*, † in his early Age, expressly declares, that the Number of Christians were *well nigh the greater Part of every City*. This he did not stand to tell the persecuting *Scapula*; and, in his Apology, he expresses himself most freely to the *Roman Magistrates*, “ * We are of Yesterday, says he, and
“ yet every Place is filled with us, your Cities,
“ your Islands, your Ports, your Corporations,
“ your Councils, Armies, Tribes and Companies,
“ the Palace, Senate and Courts of Justice
“ not excepted; your Temples alone have we
“ left free. Should such a vast Body of Men be removed from among you into some remote Part
“ of the World; you could not miss to stand amazed at your own Desolation, be affrighted at
“ your lonesome Solitude, and fancy with yourselves that the World were almost dead.” This
gives

† Ubi supra. * Hesterni sumus, et vestra omnia implevimus; Urbes, Insulas, Castella, Municipia, Conciliabula, Castra ipsa, Tribus, Decurias,

gives us a clear Discovery of the numerousness of the Church at *Rome*, in the Age immediately after the Apostles; tho' it must be readily granted, that *Tertullian* used the Liberty of an Orator, and expressed himself in an hyperbolical Strain. To the same Purpose are the Words of *Eusebius*, when speaking in general of the primitive Christian Churches, in every City and Country about the Close of the Apostolick Age. His Expressions are emphatick, and hold forth the Numbers of Christians to be very great; for, says he, † *Every City and Village immediately* [on the Back of Christ's Ascension] *were stored with Christians, like heaped Grain on a Threshing-floor.* And certain it is, that the Number of Christians, at *Rome* in particular, must have been vastly great, when the same Author says *, *They supported many other Churches in every City, relieving their Poor, and maintaining their Christian Slaves that were condemned to the Mines.* And elsewhere †, " The whole Country of *Arabia*, and all the Provinces of *Syria*, were " abundantly relieved by the Church of *Rome* alone." These Two Testimonies, the one from *Dionysius* of *Corinth*, and the other from *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, as they are related by *Eusebius*, must unquestionably determine the Church of *Rome* to have been very numerous, and made up of several Congregations, otherwise it is not conceivable, they were capable to relieve so many by their Bounty and Liberality. Justly might

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curias, Palatium, Senatum, Forum: sola vobis relinquimus Tempia. Si tanta vis Hominum in aliquem Orbis remoti Sinum abrupti cesserimus, vobis, proculdubio expavissetis ad Solitudinem vestram, ad silentium Rerum, et Stuporem quendam quasi mortui Orbis. Tertull. Apol. C. 37. Page 33. †-- Atque ita factum est, ut per singulas Civitates et Vicos confestim frequentissimæ ac populosissimæ, velut refertæ quædam frugum aræ, constitutæ sunt Ecclesiæ. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. Lib. 2. C. 3. * Euseb. L. 4. C. 22. † Idem Lib. 7. C. 4.

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the Apostle say, *The Faith and Obedience of the Saints at Rome, was heard of throughout all the World*, the Fruits and remarkable Effects thereof being so largely diffused, for the Relief and Support of those who were in Straits. And indeed, whatever Multitudes of Christians these several Testimonies evidence to have been in the Church of *Rome* in the Days of the Apostles, and soon after, the Consideration of what the Apostle says in the 16th Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, may afford sufficient Foundation to believe, that the Christians were truly numerous at the Time of his writing that Epistle to them. For it is to be noted, that the Apostle writes his Epistle to *all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be Saints*; and then in the Conclusion, he points forth many remarkable Persons that were there, and gives particular Salutations unto them. Among these we find *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, and the Church in their House; which points forth, in the strongest Terms, one Congregation or Assembly of Christians in that City. Now, that this was not the only Church there, is manifest, in that the Apostle having particularly saluted *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, and the Congregation in their House, he goes on unto others, which from the Series of his Narration must be understood exclusively of them, and they of these that are after mentioned, For after these, he goes on in making mention of a great many remarkable Persons, and such as were of Eminence in that Church; and it is observable, he not only narrates these in particular, but, as he goes along, gives many general and indefinite Salutations. Thus, he mentions *Epenetus*, *Mary*, *Andronicus* and *Julia*, *Amplias*, *Urbane*, and *Stachys*, *Apelles* approved in Christ, with these of *Aristobu-*

ristobulus's Household. He adds, *Salute Herodian my Kinsman, and them which are in the Lord* in the Household of *Narcissus, with Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord, and Lucius.* To these he joyns *Rufus* and his *Mother, Alyncretus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the Brethren which are with them.* Here is a very remarkable general, which may include a great Number; and what is immediately subjoyned makes yet a further Multiplication, *Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his Sister, and Olympas, and all the Saints that are with them.* Let us add to these the *Saints in Cesar's Household*, who sent their Salutation to the *Philippians* *. Now, I leave it to the most zealous Advocates for the Congregational Way, to judge if there was but one Assembly of Christians in the Church of *Rome*; seeing, there is not only an express mention of a Church in the House of *Priscilla* and *Aquila*, but of a great Number of remarkable Persons besides, and such general References to other indefinite Numbers, as are sufficient to give us an Idea of several distinct Assemblies there, beyond the Church mentioned in the Entry in the House of *Aquila* and *Priscilla*. There is one Thing seems to be evident, and what no sober Mind can refuse, that there were more Congregations in the Church of *Rome* than one; and if we shall allow the former Testimonies adduced, to have the Weight of an Underproof, there can be no Remains of Hesitation on this Head. And here, I take the Freedom to put our Author in Mind, to examine whether the Testimonies adduced by the Learned Author of the *Enquiry into the Constitution of the primitive Church*, are more strong, clear and conclu-

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five for Congregational Churches during the first Three Centuries, *than* these which are here laid down, are for making several Assemblies of Christians in each of the Apostolical Churches. And, that we may not be scimped on this Head, I shall give another Testimony within the Compass of that Time, which is no less full then these already mentioned, and One or Two more shall follow afterwards. The Testimony I make use of, is from *Eusebius*, who, when speaking of the peaceful Times the Christians enjoyed, before the *Dioclesian* Persecution commenced, and after the *Valerian* was over, says *, *Who can describe the innumerable Increase of the Christians, the Number of their Assemblies in every City, and the extraordinary Meetings in the Houses of Prayer? He adds, that they not being content with the Buildings they formerly enjoyed, or of old, they founded new and large Churches throughout every City.* The Period of Time of which the Historian treats, and wherein this remarkable Increase happened; was during the last 40 Years of the third Century; and the Story itself clearly implys, that tho' they, at that Time, raised large Edifices for the Accommodation of their vast Multitudes; yet, before that Time, they enjoyed old or smaller Oratories, and consequently, had distinct Places of Worship in every City. And I cannot forbear to take Notice, that *Optatus* writing against the Schism of the *Donatists*, declares in the strongest Terms, that when *Dioclesian* began to rage against the Christians, which was in the first Eight or Nine Years of the

Fourth

* Quis autem numerosas illas Aggregationes, ac Multitudines Cœtuum per singulas Civitates, insignesque Concurfus ad Oratoria describeret, quorum Gratia priscis A dificiis non contenti, in singulis Civitatibus, spaciosas et amplas ex ipsius Fundamentis construxerunt Ecclesias. *Ecclesi. Hist.* L. 8. C. 1.

Fourth Century, there were above Forty Places for Publick Worship in the City of *Rome*, which makes it evident to a Demonstration, if the Historian may be credited, that they were there during the Time of the Third Century at least.

Again, that there were a Plurality of Church Rulers and Office Bearers, is not to be questioned; seeing the Apostle expressly points forth the Duty of such, and clearly enough gives us to know, that there was not any Want of these at *Rome*. This much may be plainly gathered from what he says, *Rom.* 12. 6, 7, 8. These Words clearly make it appear, there was a Plurality of Rulers and Ecclesiastical Officers in the Church of *Rome*; which when compar'd with what was formerly laid down, gives us an unquestionable View of more Congregations in that Church than one. But because I shall have Occasion, before we clear up the Constitution of this Church, to speak more fully unto the Scope and Import of these Words, I shall shut up what I have further to add on this Head, with the Testimony of *Cornelius* * in the Third Century, who lets us know, that *there were* then, no less then *Forty Six Presbyters* in it, *Seven Deacons, Seven Subdeacons, Forty two Acolyths; Exorcists, and Readers with Door-keepers, Fifty two*; all necessary to the Service of the Church, besides *Widows, impotent and poor, above Fifteen hundred*. From this Account compared with what has been already said, I leave it to the Thoughts of every judicious Considerer, if the Church of *Rome* was but one single Congregation, during the

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* Presbyteros esse quadraginta sex, Diaconos septem, Hypodiaconos septem, Acoluthas quadraginta duos; Exorcistas et Lectores cum Janitoribus quinquaginta duos; Viduas cum adflatis supra mille quingentos, quos omnes Gratia et Benevolentia Domini nutrit. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. L. 6. C. 42.

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first Three Centuries; and he that considers the vast Increase that was made in that famous City, and the great Number of Christians there was in it, in the Close of the Apostolick Age, will not easily believe, that all of them could assemble in one Place of Meeting, soon after its first Constitution, or by the Time the Apostle writes his Epistle to *Rome*.

The *second* Thing to be considered for opening up the Constitution of this Church, is, to enquire whether all the Christians therein were under the sole Government of one Person or *Bishop*, or that of a Bench of *Presbyters*. For clearing of this, so far as Scripture Light will guide us, it must be considered, that there were a Plurality of Rulers and Ecclesiastical Office-bearers in the Church of *Rome*, whom the Apostle expressly exhorts unto the Discharge of their respective Offices, without giving us the least Hint of one single Bishop's being set over these, as having the sole Power of Jurisdiction. This is plain from what the Apostle says, *Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8. Having then Gifts differing according to the Grace that is given to us, whether Prophecy, let us prophesie according to the Proportion of Faith; or Ministry, let us wait on our Ministering; or he that teacheth, on Teaching; or he that exhorteth, on Exhortation: He that giveth, let him do it with Simplicity; he that ruleth, with Diligence.* For clearing of this, it must be observed that the Apostle having put an End to the Doctrinal Part of this Epistle, about Justification, Sanctification, and Predestination, in the preceeding Part thereof; he comes, in this Chapter, to treat of good Works, and, in the Entry, he gives a general Exhortation to the *Romans* in the most moving Terms, to present their Bodies a living Sacrifice unto God, and pre-

preserve themselves from conforming to the Guise of a present World, This being laid down, he descends more particularly to the Duties of Ecclesiastical Office-bearers as such, from the 3. to the 9. Verse. And after putting them in Mind, that it was the Duty of all in Sacred Office, not to think of themselves more highly than they ought, on Account of the Gifts that were freely bestowed on them, but to think soberly *according as God hath dealt to every Man the Measure of Faith*; he immediately urges this on them, from the Nature of the Christian Church, which he describes as an organized Body, wherein are many Members, endued with different Gifts, and design'd for distinct Offices to be exercised for the good of the whole Fabrick. This much is exprest in very strong and easy Terms in the 3, 4, & 5. Verses; and then he descends in the 6, 7, & 8. to give an Account of the different Orders of the standing Office-bearers in the Church, by Virtue of which it came to be denominate an organized Body. These he reduces into two General Heads, namely *Prophecy* and *Ministry*, by which, distinct Offices and the Duties thereto belonging are exprest; and so he requires the first to prophesie *according to the Proportion of Faith*, and the latter to *wait on ministering*; for, under both these Expressions, the Persons discharging these different Functions are intended. But then, it must be further observed, that these two Generals are subdivided into the proper Classes under them; and so, under Prophecy, there is first he that *teacheth*, which includes the Office of the Doctor or Teacher; and then he that *exhorteth*, which denotes the *Pastor*; for these two are distinguished by the same Apostle, *Eph. 4. 11.* Again, under Ministry there

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are two Classes contain'd, namely, *he that giveth*, which points forth the Order of Deacons; and *he that ruleth*, by which the ruling Elder is meant, whatever Dust some have raised against it. Thus we may reasonably include, that Originally there were in the Church of *Rome*, *Doctors*, whose Office it was to open up and explain Sacred Truths; *Pastors*, that were not only to explain, but apply the Truths of Religion to the Consciences of Persons, in Order to their being reduced into Practice; Deacons, who were chiefly concerned in ministring to the Wants of the Poor, and are required to do it with Simplicity; and lastly, the ruling Elder, whom the Apostle requires to do his Office with Diligence and Care. This is the Sense and Meaning of the Words, agreed on by the Current of our best Commentators and Criticks, such as *Calvin*, *Paræus*, *Piscator*, *Beza*, and Others, on the Text. It not being my present Design to lanch forth into the Dispute about ruling Elders, that Point being fully discussed by several * Learned Hands, from whom the unprejudiced may receive full Satisfaction. There is one Thing manifest from what hath been said, namely, that there were a Plurality of Rulers in the Church of *Rome*, without the least Hint of a Bishop over them, to whom the sole Power of Jurisdiction in that Church was committed; for the Apostle speaks in the first General Division, in the plural Number. This seems to be confirmed from what the same Apostle says in his second Epistle to *Timothy* ||, where he mentions the Salutation of *Eubulus*, *Pudens*, *Linus* and *all the Brethren*, to him. And in his Epistle to
Phile-

* *Altare Dama* C. Ch. 12. *Gilespie Assert.* Ch. Gov. Part 1. *Rutherford's* *due Right of Presb.* Pag. 146. *Jus Div. Reg. Eccl* Ch. 11. *Ander.* against *Rhind*, Pag. 175. &c. || 2 *Tim.* 4. 21.

Philemon, Ver. 24. which was written from *Rome* as well as the former, he expressly mentions *Marcus*, *Aristarchus*, *Demas*, *Lucas*, his fellow *Labourers*; which clearly evinceth they were Persons in Office, and Workers together with him in the Ministry of the Gospel. Now, if it shall be granted that *Eubulus*, *Pudens* and *Linus* were Persons in Office, and these express by *Brethren*, were in Office also, which that name frequently denotes in Sacred Writ, it makes it very clear, that there was a large College of Pastors in the Church of *Rome*; especially when *Marcus*, *Aristarchus*, *Demas*, and *Lucas* are joyn'd with them, who were undoubtedly Men of a sacred and publick Character. And indeed considering, that the Apostle was writing to a Person in Office, it is most natural to think, that as *Linus* is † owned by all to have been a Pastor in the Church of *Rome*; so the *Brethren* and the others mentioned were of the same Character also. For as in all the other Epistles written by the Apostle *Paul* from *Rome*, the Word *Brethren* is never made use of, to express the private Christians of that Church, in their Salutations, but that of Saints; so *Linus* being a Pastor in *Rome*, it is most reasonable to believe, that these who were joyned with him, were no less of a publick Function and Character. And that which seems to put this Matter out of Doubt, is, that the Apostle puts a manifest Difference between *Saints* and *Brethren* in *Rome*, when he says in his Epistle to the *Philippians*, Salute every Saint in Christ Jesus, the Brethren which are with me greet you. All the Saints salute you, chiefly they that are of *Cesar's Household*, Phil. 4. 21, 22. From this it is evident that there were *Brethren* distinct from
Saints

† Euseb. L. 3. Ch. 2. & 7.

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Saints in the Church of *Rome*, unless we should impeach the Apostle with the grossest Tautology ; and this Consideration establishes at once what we maintain, namely, that there were a College of Persons in Sacred Office in that Church, all on an equal footing in their Charge and Actions, or *Brethren* in Office, in which their Parity is clearly expressed. Thus *Brethren*, even by the Confession of Dr. *Hammond* on the Text, is to be understood of *Linus*, *Clemens*, and Others ; and so we may plainly see there was nothing but a perfect Parity among the Pastors in the Church of *Rome*, than which nothing can be more apposite to express the Original Constitution thereof. There is not any Thing we can learn from the Sacred Oracles, that give us the least Hint, that there was one Person or Bishop set over the Presbyters and Christians at *Rome*, to whom the sole Power of Rule and Government was committed ; and consequently such an Order or Office in that Church is without a Divine Warrant, and what was not from the Beginning. That which the *New Testament* gives no Countenance to, or warrants us to receive, as an essential Branch of the Constitution of the Gospel Church (which a Bishop is, according to our Episcopalians) can never be said to have the Stamp of Divine Authority ; and this Way of Reasoning was look'd upon as good and convincing to every sober Judgment, by no less Man than the Learned (a) Dr. *Barrow*. Here is one Thing clear, that there were more Pastors in the single Church of *Rome*, all on a Level, and consequently acting in Parity, without the smallest *Innuendo* of one single Bishop's having the sole Jurisdiction therein, which is a convincing Evidence, that the Apostolical

Consti-

(a) Pope's Sup. Page 178.

Constitution of this Church was not Episcopal; seeing, according to the Episcopalians, there can be but *one Bishop in one Church*, whereas there was here a College of *Brethren or Equals*. In a Word, when we consider, that the Apostles, while they were together in the single Church of *Jerusalem*, acted in Parity among themselves, and, after they had ordained Elders, in a Conjunction with them; and that this was their usual Practice afterwards, in every constitute Church where they were, or had Occasion to come, we may justly look on the Episcopal Scheme of Government as an human Invention, and without the Stamp of the Redeemer's Authority. Thus, we may see, how little Foundation there is from the Original Constitution of the Church of *Rome*, for either *Pope* or *Prelate*, who have made so great a Noise in the World, to the Reproach of the Gospel, the Dishonour of its adorable Author, and the Destruction of many Thousands that have assum'd to themselves the Name of Christians.

I shall only further add, The Church of *Philippi* is no less a living Witness against the Episcopal Scheme of Government, than these Churches already mention'd; for, *Philip. i. i.* there is an express Mention of a Plurality of Bishops therein, contrary to their received *Axiom*: And as for their ridiculous Conceits about *Epaphroditus* his being their Bishop, they are fully consider'd in the *Appendix*; as also these of *Dr. Hammond*. Besides, the Church of *Thessalonica* is equally an *Antipode* to Episcopacy; for it was under the Government of a College of Presbyters, and the Christians therein are expressly required to *know them which laboured among them*, and had the Rule over them in the Lord, --- and esteem them very highly in Love for
their

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their Works Sake, 1 Theff. 5. 12, 13. Can there be any Thing more exprefs, than that the Rule and Government of this Church was not in the Hands of a fingle Perfon, but a Plurality, to whom they were required to fubmit and fubject themfelves equally, without the leaft Hint of preferring one of them before another? This, I cannot help thinking, imports an Equality among thefe Rulers, in the moft ftrong and eafy Terms.

Thus, I have confider'd the Constitution of the *New Testament Church*, and have endeavour'd, as impartially as I could, to find out what that Polity and Form of Government was, which was authoriz'd by Chrift, and instituted by his Apoftles: And I humbly fubmit it to the Judgment of the Judicious and Unprejudic'd, to confider, if the Presbyterian Scheme and Model of Government is not that which hath the Countenance of the *Great Head* of the Church, and the Pattern of thofe whom he immediately fent forth and infallibly guided, in giving the World a clear View of what they were to obferve as to the external Polity of his Houfe, in all future Ages. And fo, he that refolves to make the Divine Oracles the Rule and Meafure of Ecclefiaftical Government, will at once fee, from what hath been faid, that *Democracy* in the Church is an Extreme on the one Hand, and a *Monarchy* in every Church, on the other. And becaufe thefe who go on the laft Extreme, I mean the Epifcopalians, make a great Noife of Antiquity, and would perfwade the World, that the Current of ancient Writers were on their Side, I fhall, in the fubfequent Chapter, give fome fhort Account of what may be faid from that Airth; but ftill muft be inviolably in the Belief, That the Writings of the Apoftles are more ancient than any that
can

can be adduced, and such as rely thereon are not in Danger of being deceived, nor need be afraid of being branded with the Crime of Novelty.

But before I enter on that Subject, I shall, in the Close of this Chapter, add a Passage or two from the Learned Bishop *Jewel*, against *Harding*, as they are represented by *Richard Hooker*, in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book 2. Page 69. The *Jesuite* having objected to him, that his Arguments taken from the Scriptures were only *negative*, he makes his Answer full to our Purpose, in these Words,

“ This Kind of Argument is thought good, when-
 “ soever Proof is taken of God’s Word, and is u-
 “ sed not only by us, but also by *St. Paul*, and
 “ many of the Catholick Fathers. *St. Paul* saith,
 “ *God said not unto Abraham, In thy Seeds all the*
 “ *Nations of the Earth shall be blessed*; but, *in thy*
 “ *Seed, which is Christ*; and therefore he thought
 “ he made a good Argument. Likewise, saith *Ori-*
 “ *gen* and other learned Fathers, The Bread
 “ which the Lord gave unto his Disciples, saying
 “ unto them, *Take and eat*, he deferred not, nor
 “ commanded it to be reserved till the next Day.--
 “ This Kind of Proof is thought to hold good in
 “ God’s Commandments, for, that they be full
 “ and perfect: And God hath specially charged us,
 “ That we should never put to them, nor take
 “ from them: And therefore it seemeth good unto
 “ them who have learned of Christ, *Unas est ma-*
 “ *gister vester Christus*, and have heard the Voice
 “ of God the *Father* from Heaven, *Ipsium audite*,
 “ But unto them that add unto the Word of God
 “ what them listeth, and make God’s Will sub-
 “ ject unto their Will, and break God’s Command-
 “ ments for their own Tradition Sake, unto them
 “ it seemeth not good ----. The ancient Father
 “ *Ireneus*

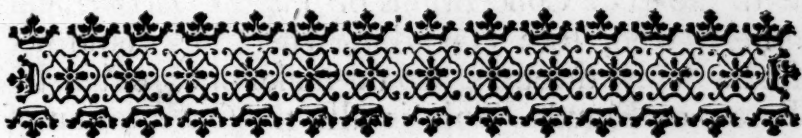
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“*Ireneus* thus stayed himself as we do, by the
 “*Negative*: This Thing neither did the Prophets
 “publish, nor our Lord teach, nor the Apostles
 “deliver. By the like *Negative*, *Chrysostom* saith,
 “This Tree neither *Paul* planted, nor *Apollos* wa-
 “tered, nor God increased. In like Sort, *Leo*
 “saith, What needeth it to believe that Thing,
 “that neither the Law hath taught, nor the Pro-
 “phets have spoken, nor the Gospel hath preach-
 “ed, nor the Apostles have delivered.”

Thus, we satisfie our selves, that if the Episco-
 pal Scheme of Government and Hierarchy is not
 a Tree planted by *Paul*, nor watered by *Apollos*,
 nor countenanced by the Authority of God in the
 Scriptures, It is destitute of a Divine Founda-
 tion,



CHAP.



CHAP. IV.

The Writings of the Fathers most defective in the Time wherein they could have been most useful. A Succession of Persons, in any ancient Catalogue, no Argument of a Succession of Apostolical Power. A rational Account of the Time in which the Original Government of the Church was changed. Some Considerations, for further clearing and confirming that there was truly a Change made in the Polity of the Church, &c.

SECT. I.

The Writings of the Fathers most defective in the Time immediately after the Apostolick Age: Hence, the Uncertainty of the Lists of Bishops succeeding one another in the Churches planted by the Apostles, particularly in the Church of Rome. No solid Evidence that Peter was the Founder of that Church, or that ever he was there.

THE *Apostolick Acts* carry us no further than the Arrival of the Apostle *Paul* at *Rome*, and a short Account of his Reception from the *Jews* that were in that City, and from the Conclusion of that Book, as is observed by the Judicious *Scaliger* *, to the Middle of *Trajan*, there was

* Prolegom. in Chron. Euseb.

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was nothing but a mere *Chaos* of Time, filled up with the rude Conceptions of *Papias*, *Hermes* and others, who, like *Hannibal*, when they could not find a Way through, would make one, either by Force or Fraud. This is also the Observation of *Tilenus**, who expressly adopts the Opinion of *Scaliger* on this Head. And the Learned Dr. *Stillingfleet*† is no less express as to the Defect of History in these early Times; and, at the same Time, mentions the Observation of *Scaliger* with Approbation; and so he concludes, that we have nothing certain but what we have in the Scriptures. And || *Lactantius* says, in an Agreeableness to this, *Things of a Religious Nature have no Foundation or Solidity, which are not supported by the Divine Oracles.* Thus, the Time in which Antiquity could have proven most useful to us, is that wherein it is most defective, namely, immediately after the Apostolick Age. *Eusebius* did not write his History till the Fourth Century; and all the Authority he has for his Vouchers in these early Times, is but an uncertain *Clement*, and the Commentaries of *Hegesippus*, whose Relations are most uncertain, no less than many Things narrated by the Historian himself. And there can be no clearer Evidence of the Precariousness, and the little Credit there is to be given to *Eusebius*, in what he relates in the first Parts of his History, than what he himself lets us know. For, when he speaks of *Paul* and *Peter*, and the Churches planted by them, ‡ he ingenuously says, *It is a hard Matter to find out who succeeded the Apostles in the Churches planted by them, unless it be those mention'd in the Writings of Paul.*

* *Altare Damas* P. 90 Edit. ult. † *Irenic*. P. 297. || *Nec ullum fundamentum aut firmitatem possunt habere, quæ nullis Divinarum vocum fulciuntur Oraculis*, *Lactant.* Lib. 7. §. 2. ‡ *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 3. c. 4.

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Paul. And *Petavius* says *, After the Death of *Peter* and *Paul*, the Deeds of the rest of the Apostles being neglected, or not recorded in almost any true History, they ly dead and in Obscurity. From all these, it is easy to perceive how much Credit there is due to the bold and positive Assertions of the Episcopalians, as to the Line of Succession of their Bishops in several of the Churches planted by the Apostles; and what Authority they go upon, when they speak with so much Assurance, in setting down every Man's Name in his Order, as if they had been so many Notaries to the Apostles, and continued with the Church ever since, as Masters of Tradition. Thus, it comes to be received as a Part of Gospel, that *Philip* was Bishop of *Trallis*; *Ananias* Bishop of *Damascus*; *Nicolaus* Bishop of *Samaria*; *Barnabas* Bishop of *Milan*; *Silas* Bishop of *Corinth*; *Sylvanus* of *Thessalonica*; *Crescens* of *Chalcedon*; *Andreas* of *Byzantium*; and *Peter* of *Rome*. But what Ground is there to pin our Faith to such a Line of Succession, when *Tiber* itself was never more muddy than what Antiquity is, as to the Successors of *Peter* the pretended Bishop of *Rome*: For, † *Tertullian*, *Rufinus* and others, place *Clement* next to him; but *Eusebius* and *Irenaeus* place *Anacletus* before *Clement*; and *Epiphanius* and *Optatus* fix not only *Anacletus* but *Cletus* before him; And, to conclude the Harmony, *Austin* and *Damasus*, with others of the Ancients, make both *Anacletus*, *Cletus* and *Linus* to have been before *Clement*. Here is a Labyrinth in the very first Entry; and it will not be easy to reconcile these different Sentiments with any solid Evidence that can be brought from the Ancients;

* Rationa. Lib. 5. C. 3. † Magdeburg. Cent. 1. L. 2. C. 19, apud
Stillington's Irenicon.

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and the Writings of the *New Testament* cannot be alledged for a Decision as to the Precedency of any of these; seeing, from what we can learn from thence, there was no Superiority in the Character of *Linus* to that of *Clement*, or any others mention'd in the Catalogues of that Church, who were their Co-temporaries; for, all of them were Colleagues, or Brethren in Office; which, at once, destroys a Subordination of Office or Character. Nay, such Inconsistencies in their Catalogues, are a clear Verification, that they were made up long after the Time in which *Clement*, *Linus* and the others mention'd did live, when Episcopacy was come to have the Ascendant, and the *mystery of Iniquity* had rais'd its Head more visibly; and so the Authors of these Catalogues use the Dialect of their own Times, and not that which was in and soon after the Apostolick Age. Besides, as this Succession in the Church of *Rome*, which is most insisted upon, is far from being clear and satisfying, in a Point whereon the Episcopalians lay so great Strefs for the Support of their Hierarchy; so it is no more certain in the other Churches in which they pretend a Succession of Bishops; and, at the same Time, all the Catalogues that are pretended to, are but very few, in Comparison with the Churches planted by the Apostles. But, to return to the Church of *Rome*, the Learned * *Blondel* and † *Junius* speak at some Length on the different Sentiments with respect unto that Succession, and both agree, that *Linus*, *Cletus* and *Anacletus*, and others that are mention'd, were Co-temporaries and Colleagues in that Church, and to them the Government thereof belonged in common. Of the same
Sentiment

* *Præfat. in Apol. Pag. 25, &c.* † *Controv. 3. L. 2. C. 5. Not. 18.*

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Sentiment was the Learned * *Spanheim*, who, at the same Time, declares, that there is no solid Evidence, That ever *Peter* was at *Rome*, or the Founder of that Church. The Writings of the *New Testament* are wholly silent, and give us not the least Hint that ever he was there; and as for the Testimony of Antiquity on that Point in Particular, it is much to be suspected, considering how much the *Romish* Church was interested herein, and made the Belief of it a necessary Article of Faith, without which Salvation was not to be obtain'd. The Learned Dr. *Barrow* says, † “ Many have argued him never to have been at *Rome*, which “ Opinion I shall not avow, as bearing a more “ civil Respect to the ancient Testimonies and “ Traditions; although many false and fabulous “ Relations of that Kind having crept into History and common Vogue; many doubtful Reports “ having passed concerning him; many notorious “ Forgeries having been vented about his Travels “ and Acts (all that is reported of him out of “ Scripture having the Smack of Legend) would “ tempt a Man to suspect any Thing touching “ him, which is grounded only on human Tradition; so that the Forger of his Epistle to St. “ *James* might well induce him, saying, *If while “ I do yet survive*, Men dare to feign such Things “ of me, how much more will they dare to do so “ after my Decease? ” There seems to be one Thing manifest, That he was not the Founder of that Church, and if ever he was at *Rome*, it was but a very short Time: And indeed, the Time fixed on by the oldest Tradition, of his going to that City, is rejected by several || Learned Men, and

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* *Hist. Chr. Sect. 1. Page 569.* † *Pope's Supr. Page 122.* || See *Stalig. in Euseb. Page 89.* and *Wales in Euseb. Page 2, 14.*

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even these of the *Romish* Perswasion. The infallible Oracles seem to make it clear, that he could not be at *Rome* before the Arrival of *Paul*, for at that Time the *Jews* who dwelt there, had not heard any distinct Account of the Gospel, but desir'd him to declare his Opinion touching that *Seet* which was evil spoken of every where, *Acts* 28. This would seem to make it plain, that *Peter* was not the first Founder of that Church, and Preacher of the Gospel to the *Jews* there, as the Minister of the Circumcision; but the Apostle *Paul* who lived two Years among them in his own hired House, no Man forbidding him. That *Peter* was not at *Rome*; during these two Years, is acknowledged by Bishop *Pearson**: And there is as little Ground to think he was there before; seeing, before *Paul's* Arrival, the *Jews* appear to have been Strangers to the Gospel, and only heard thereof by Report; which could not have been, if there had been a Church planted in that Place. And this is further evident, in that the Apostle, in his Epistle to the *Romans*, expressly mentions that he preached the Gospel, *not where Christ was named, lest he should build upon anothers Man's Foundation*, *Rom.* 15. 20. Is it supposable he would have written after this Manner to the believing *Romans*, if *Peter* had been at *Rome*, and the first Founder of that Church? Or would the Assertion have been true in Fact with respect unto that Church, if *Paul* had not been the first Founder of it? Besides, if *Peter* had been Bishop of *Rome*, as the *Romanists* maintain, is it reasonable to imagine, the Apostle *Paul* would have neglected to send a Salutation to him, in the very Front of that large Catalogue mentioned by him, in the last Chapter of his Epistle indited to that

* *De Success. Rom. Epif. Dissert.* 1, Page 64.

that Church? Or, that he would have omitted to send a Salutation from him, as well as the other Faithful which were then in *Rome*, in the Epistles which he wrote while he was Prisoner in that City? From this Place it was he sent the Epistle to the *Colossians*; and we find *Aristarchus*, *Marcus*, *Iustus*, *Epaphras*, *Luke* and *Demas* sent Salutations to them, but there is an utter Silence as to *Peter*. The first three of these he expressly mentions, as being a peculiar Comfort unto him, and his Assistants; which is a clear Proof he had not the Apostle *Peter* as his Fellow-labourer in that Church. And after this, he wrote the last Epistle to *Timothy*, an Epistle to *Philemon*, one to the *Galatians*, one to the *Ephesians*, and one to the *Philippians*; and yet, in all the Salutations mention'd in any of these, there is a profound Silence as to *Peter*, while others are mentioned that were with him. Sacred Writ * lets us know of his having been at *Jerusalem*, *Antioch*, *Babylon* and *Corinth*, and there is good Reason to believe he was frequently in these † Churches to which he indited his Catholick Epistles; but, that ever he was at *Rome*, and much less, that he was the Founder of that Church, there is not the smallest Evidence from the *New Testament*, but the contrary. Now, I leave it to the Consideration of the Judicious, if there be any solid Foundation, that *Peter* was the Founder of the Church of *Rome*, or that he fix'd his Episcopal Chair there, and took upon him the Charge thereof. This, in itself, was expressly contrary to his Apostolick Commission, by Virtue of which, he had the Inspection of all the Churches, and the

H h 3

whole

* Acts 11. 2. & 15. 7. Gal. 1. 18. & 2. 9, 11. 1 Pet. 5. 13. & 3. 2. & 1. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 12. † Πέτρος πολλὰκις πόντον καὶ Βαβυλῶν ἐπισκέψατο, Epiphani. Hæc. 27.

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whole World was his *Diocese*, and so was not capable of any fixed Residence in any Church whatsoever: And to conceive him thus confined, was to degrade him from his Apostolick Character, and *would be such an Irregularity, as if a Bishop should be made a Deacon*, as is observed by the Learned Dr. Barrow*, who, to all Intents, baffles this vain and ridiculous Conceit. Thus, if *Peter* was not Bishop at *Rome*, the first Link of the Chain of Succession is void, and so all the rest must fall to the Ground, as being destitute of any solid Foundation. I know some will reckon all this but a *Negative Way of Reasoning*, and consequently, of small Weight on the present Head. But it must be remembered, that it carries in it something positive and strong; for, what can conclude more forcibly against a Thing's being an Article of Faith, than when it can be made appear, that it has no Foundation in the Scriptures, the Word of God which cannot lie? This is a Point on which a great Stress is laid, and that which much affects the Church of Christ; and so, if it is destitute of a Warrant in the Infalible Oracles, it must fall to the Ground. How is it possible to argue a Matter of Right or Fact more clearly to be without Foundation, than by making it appear, that it is not extant in these Laws and Constitutions which are able to warrant such a Right, or infallibly determine the Fact? I cannot help thinking, that such Arguments, in these Circumstances, are not merely *negative*, but rather of a positive Nature; namely, proving Things not to be, because not affirmed where they ought to be, in order to give them an undoubted Faith or Credit. Such Kind of Arguments will have Weight with a Mind endued with
Honesty

* Pope's Suprem. Page 120, &c.

Honesty and Prudence, however much they are spurned at by the furious Bigots in our Day. But will these Gentlemen give Credit to the Testimony of the *Fathers* for the Validity of such Arguments, whom they hold so much in Admiration? If they will rest here, I shall give them two or three of many that I could adduce, and else where have collected. The first is that of *Theodore*, who says, "By the Holy Scriptures alone am I persuaded. It is an idle and senseless Thing, to seek these Things that are past in Silence. I am not so bold as to affirm any Thing which the Sacred Scripture passeth in Silence. We ought not to speak these Things that are past in Silence; but rest in the Things that are written." But no less express is *Cyril of Alexandria*, "That which the Holy Scripture hath not said, by what Means shall we receive, and account it among these Things that be true?" Again, *Basil* says, "Believe these Things which are written; these Things that are not written, seek not. It is a manifest falling from the Faith, and an Argument of Arrogancy, either to reject any Point of these Things that are written, or to bring in any of these Things that are not written. --- That every Word and Action ought to be confirmed by the Testimony of the Holy Scripture, for the Confirmation of the Faith of the Good, and the Confusion of the Evil." He adds, "That it is the Property of a faithful Man, to be fully persuaded of the Truth of the Things that are delivered in the Holy Scripture, and not to dare either to reject or to add any Thing thereunto. For, if whatsoever is not of Faith be Sin, as the Apostle saith, and Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God; then whatsoever

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“ is without the Holy Scripture, being not of
 “ Faith, must needs be Sin.” To conclude, *Jerom*
 is fully of the same Mind, when speaking concer-
 “ ning Hereticks, namely, “ The Things which
 “ they themselves find and feign to be received as
 “ it were by Tradition from the Apostles, without
 “ the Authority and Testimony of the Scriptures,
 “ the Word of God doth smite.” These Testimo-
 nies I have borrowed from the Learned Bishop *U-*
sher, and they are to be seen in his Answer to the
Jesuite’s Challenge, on the Head of Traditions, Pag.
 35, &c. Not to insist on many others I could have
 added to the same Purpose, I leave it to the sober
 Thoughts of the Unprejudiced, what Countenance
 the Episcopalians have from the *Fathers*, to make
 Use of their Authorities, to make up a *Jus Divi-*
num, where the Scripture is silent.

But, not inclining to proceed further on this
 Head, I refer the Reader to the Learned *Spanheim*,
 who, at great Length, disputes this Point, and, to
 a Demonstration, baffles the Conceit of *Peter’s* be-
 in at *Rome*, and the several Arguments that are
 adduced for that End. *Vide Miscell. Sac. Antiq.*
L. 3. Dissert. 3.

S E C T.

S E C T. II.

Tho' the Catalogues of Persons succeeding one another in the Apostolick Churches were admitted; yet they do not prove a Succession of Bishops with sole Power of Ordination and Jurisdiction in a single Person: But only the Succession of the eldest of the Presbyters, or Presides, or Moderators of the Bench of Presbyters, by whose common Counsel these Churches were governed.

BUT, because the *Succession* of this Church is much insisted upon, I shall next make it appear, that tho' it were granted, there was a Succession of Persons there; yet it will by no Means follow, that he who was in this Line from the Apostles Times, or the first planting of that Church, was of a superior Order to the Presbyters ordained therein. A bare Succession carries no more in it, than that there was one in these Churches planted by the Apostles, who was *Preses* to the Assemblies of the Rulers, and from whom the Succession was handed down or drawn. A Succession of Persons is that which is still sought after, and laid down in the ancient Catalogues; but this will never be demonstrative of a Succession of Power; for the *Nassi* in the *Sanhedrim* was indeed the *Preses* in that Assembly, but not of a higher or more raised Order than the rest of that Bench. Thus, a List or Catalogue of Names, in a few of the Apostolick Churches, all following one after another from the Apostles Days, who planted those Churches, can never be a Proof that each of these was possessed with the sole Power of Jurisdiction in these Churches. The Question is not, whether there

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there might be a List of Persons found out in some of the Churches planted by the Apostles, to whom After-ages gave the Name of Bishops; but whether these Persons were possessed with a Power over Presbyters, so as to have the sole Power of Jurisdiction; this is more than difficult to make good; and a mere Succession is far from being a suitable Proof of such a Point. This will easily appear from a plain and obvious Example, namely, at *Athen's* the People made choice of Nine Persons every Year, to have the Management of the Affairs of their Common Wealth; all these were possessed of a Parity of Power among themselves, and assembled together in a fixed Place, for consulting about the publick Concerns of that State: But, tho' all of them were of the same Order, and had equal Power in Management; yet only his Name who was their *Αρχων* or *Preses*, was set in the publick Records of that Year, and their Catalogues yearly were reckoned from him, as is observed by the judicious *Stillingsfleet*. In this it is to be noted, that there was a Succession in one single Person, without any Superiority of Power in him over his Colleagues, or the rest of the Bench. This makes it evident, that a bare Succession of Persons is no Argument of a Succession of Paramount Power. Thus, the Name *Προεδρος* was made use of among the primitive Christians by *Justin Martyr*, to express the President of their Assemblies, and included no more but a Precedency of Dignity allowed to a Moderator or Speaker. This is manifest from *Clemens Romanus* in his excellent Epistle to the Church of *Corinth*. His Words in the Entry of his Epistle, are, *The Church of God which sojourns at Rome, to the Church of God which sojourns*

journs at Corinth. And * *Eusebius* agrees in this, when he says, that *Clement* mentioned by *Irenæus* wrote an Epistle to the Church of *Corinth*, in the Name of the Church of *Rome*. Now, both these compared together, make it clear, that *Clement* was no more but the *Preses* of that Church; it being exprelly mentioned and clearly exprefs'd that the Letter was not written in his own Name, as being the Fruit of his Episcopate, but in the Name of that Church; which can include no more, than that he was their Mouth in that Matter, or one who was the *Preses* of their Assembly, and impowered to write in their Name. And indeed, every one who has perused that Epistle, and is not under the Influence of Prejudice, must at once be perswaded, that *Presbyter* and *Bishop*, in his early Day, were the same both in Name and Character, as the Passages referred to in the Margin do clearly evince, some of which I shall transcribe. He says †, " The Apostles did foresee, " that there would be a great Contention about the " Name Episcopacy, and therefore being endued " with a perfect Fore-knowledge, appointed the " forenamed Offices, namely, *Bishops* and *Deacons*, and left the Manner of their Succession " described, that so when they died, other approved Men might succeed them, and perform " their Office." From this it is evident to a demonstration, that there were only two Orders of Officers instituted by the Apostles. And, I look upon it as an uncontroverted Truth with every sober Mind, that if two Orders of Officers were only

* Euseb. Hist. Eccl. L. 3. C. 14. † Καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἡμῶν ἐγνώσαν, διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι ἔρρις ἔσται περὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς. Διὰ ταύτην οὖν αἰτίαν πρόβνυσιν ἐκληφότες τελείαν κατέστησαν τοὺς προειρημένους, &c. Pag 57. Ep. I. ad Corin.

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ly instituted by the Apostles, who were under infallible Inspiration, it is not in the Power of any Mortal to give a Commission to a Third, or split one of these Orders into Two, as the Episcopalians do, when they make the Order of Bishops superior to that of Presbyters. This Passage must stare a certain sort of Persons in the Face, when it so clearly lets us see, that what is their Practice and Principle, was perfectly foreseen by the Apostles, who perceived by the Divine Spirit, that there would Contentions arise by Means of turbulent and aspiring Men, who should seek after the Episcopal Office, to the depressing that of Presbyters. For which Reasons, says *Clement* † The Apostles appointed two Orders of Officers in the Places where they preached, and described the Manner and Qualifications of their Successors. And, that he might leave no Room for any to doubt, that the same Persons which he designed Bishops, were in all Respects Presbyters, and that both Names were expressive of the same Office and Character, and were alike in the Church of *Corinth* to which he wrote; he gives an unquestionable Instance in the same Epistle, when he comes to speak of their unnatural Schism, in these Words, || *It is a most shameful Thing, and unworthy of Christians, to hear that the firm and ancient Church of Corinth should, for the sake of one or two Persons, raise a Sedition against the Presbyters: And afterwards, * only let the Flock of Christ enjoy*

† Κατὰ χώρας οὖν καὶ πόλεις κηρύσσοντες καθίζανον τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν δοκιμάσαντες τῷ πνεύματι εἰς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλουσῶν κηρύσειν, &c. Pag. 54. || Αἰσχρὰ ἀγαπητοὶ καὶ λίαν αἰσχρὰ καὶ ἀνάξια τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ ἀγωγῆς αἰουσεθε: τὴν βεβαιωτάτην καὶ ἀρχαίαν Κορινθίων ἐκκλησίαν δι' ἐν ἡδύο πρόσωπα ταρασσάμεν πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους, P. 62.

* ——— μόνον τὸ ποταμιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐρηπνεύτω μετὰ τῶν καθεσαμένων πρεσβυτέρων, Pag. 69.

enjoy its Peace with the Presbyters that are set over it. If there had been a Bishop in this Church, to whom the sole Power of Rule and Government did belong, what was the Occasion of this Schism, that being an Office so well calculate for the Suppression thereof? What was the Reason of *Clement's* being so silent, nay, neglective of him, as not so much as to mention him in any Part of his Epistle? And, if he was dead, as a Learned Episcopal Writer alledges, without all Shadow of Reason for his Allegation, whence was it that there was not the least Notice taken of it in the Epistle, and Directions given them for making Choice of another, for remedying their Schism? The plain Reason was, because there was no such Office Bearer institute by Divine Appointment. This most undoubted Piece of Antiquity comes nearest to the Apostolical Stile, and in the strongest Terms makes the *Bishops* and *Presbyters* of the Church of *Corinth* to be one and the same Persons.

In the same Strain, *Polycarp*, the Disciple of *St. John*, speaks in his Epistle to the *Philippians*, * *Be ye subject to the Presbyters and Deacons, as it were unto God and Christ, even as chaste Virgins rejoicing in a pure Conscience: Let the Presbyters be simple and innocent, merciful in all Things, turning all Men from their Errors, &c.* From this Passage, the Learned *Blondel* † observes, that at this Time, there was no Bishop in the Church of *Philippi* superior to Presbyters, but that the whole Fraternity of Christians were governed by a common Council; and that there was no Change made in the

* Αὐτὸ δὲ οὐκ ἀπέχεσθαι ἀπὸ πάντων τούτων υποτασσομένους τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις καὶ διακόνοις, ὡς Θεῷ καὶ Χριστῷ ὡς παρθένοις ἐν ἀμώμῳ καὶ ἀγνῇ συνειδήσει περικτατέιν, καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι δὲ εὐσπλαγχνοί, *Polyc. Epist. ad Philip.* † *Apol. Pag. 15, 16.*

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the Model of Church Government before the Death of St. *John*. Besides, it must be noted, that there is an exact Harmony between these two ancient Writers, and both conspire together for making a Plurality of Rulers in the same Church, whom *Clement* terms promiscuously *Bishops* or *Presbyters* in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*, and *Polycarp* only *Presbyters* in his to the *Philippians*, whom yet the Apostle *Paul* designs by the Name of *Bishops*. Nor is there any Weight in what is objected by some, namely, that the Inscription of the Epistle intimates that *Polycarp* was vested with an Episcopal Jurisdiction over the *Presbyters* at *Smyrna*, because it is said, *Polycarp and the Presbyters that are with him*; seeing, the utmost the Phrase can bear, is no more than this, viz. *Polycarp and the rest of the Presbyters of that College*. This Stile was very frequent with the Ancients, and particularly with *Cyprian*, as is observed in several Instances by *Blondel*. I shall only give one Instance among many, which *Cyprian* uses in his 59th Epistle, which runs, *Cyprianus & ceteri Collegæ qui in concilio affuerunt*; which Expressions make these whom he mentions in general, to be his equals in Office and Character. Besides, there are many good Reasons wherefore *Polycarp* was mentioned in the Inscription by Name, and not the rest of his Colleagues; he was probably more known to the *Philippians* than the rest, the only Church Ruler ordained by *John* at *Smyrna* that remained alive, and so, on Account of his Age, was the first in Order among these in Office there, and occupied the Place of their *Preses*, and wrote in their Name.

This

This exactly agrees with a College of equals, and is further confirmed from the Words of * *Hermas*, when speaking of the writing of two Books, one of which was to be sent to *Clement*, and another to *Graptus*, And, says he, *Clemens shall send it to foreign Cities,---and Graptus shall admonish the Widows and Orphans, but thou shalt read it with, or relate it unto the Presbyters in this City, who govern the Church.* Whether this *Hermas* was the same mentioned by the Apostle *Paul* in the last Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans*, or not, I shall not determine; but there is one Thing manifest from his Words, namely, that the Church in one City was govern'd by the Bench or College of Presbyters, without the smallest Hint of any one Bishop's being set over them of a more raised Jurisdiction or Power, than they. The same Antient † Author says, *The polished white Stones are the Apostles, and Bishops, and Doctors, and Deacons, who walked in the Clemency of God, and discharged the Episcopal Office, and taught and ministred.* Again, *Such are some Bishops, that is, Governors of the Churches,--- and these who have the Charge of the Services.* The Observation of *Blondel* on both these Passages is just, namely, that *Hermas* makes only two Degrees of Church Officers, that of Bishops who governed the Churches, and whom before he termed Presbyters, and that of Deacons who had the Charge of the Services; for it is acknowledged by all, that the Doctors are all one with the Bishops, when they are said to have performed that Office, and that the Apostles, as they are opposed to Bishops, were placed above the whole

* Κλήμης πέμψει εἰς τὰ ἔξω πόλεις, ----- οὐ δὲ ἀνατρέψατος τοῖς Πρεσβυτέροις τῆς ἐκκλησίας, *Hermas* L. 1. Visione 2. † Visione 3. apud *Blondel* in *Apol.* Pag. 17. vid. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* L. 3. Ch. 3.

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whole Clergy. The Antient and Primitive Bishops perpetually preached or taught; and Chrysostom, Theophylact, Theodoret, Sedulius, and after them, Aquinas, Haymo, Benedictus, Justinianus on Eph. 4. 11. All make Pastor, Bishop and Doctor to be the same. And Cornelius a Lapide on the same Text, makes mention of Jerom, Austin, Anselm, and the Council of Carthage, as being of the same Judgment. And when Hermas † in another Place says, *The earthly Spirit exalts itself and seeks the first Seat: --- And they, having a certain Envy among themselves, contend for Principality and Dignity,* is so far from being, an Argument for the superior and jurisdictional Power of Bishops over Presbyters, or an Insinuation of its Lawfulness, that it concludes the Contrary, from what the same Author there mentions, namely, *But all such are mad and infatuate, who strive among themselves for Principality; --- Besides, that the Life of those who keep the Divine Commands consists in the Observation of them, and not in any Principality or Dignity.* By this he plainly condemns a Diotrephizing Spirit, or such as love to have the Preeminence and first Seat. When the Apostles contended who among them should be the greatest; did this include in it, that our Lord had assured them before hand, that the Principality of one of them over the Rest was a Thing lawful, and that such a raised Character was agreeable to his Will? As none will assert this, so no more will it follow in the present Case. Besides, the chief Seat was the Privilege of the Preses of the Assembly, or Synod of Presbyters; which, as has been all along observed, does not include a Primacy of Power or Jurisdiction, but only that of mere Order or Decency. Thus it still holds

† Lib. 2. Mandat. 12. apud Blond. ubi Sup.

holds good, that, according to *Hermas*, there were only two Orders of Church Officers; seeing, from what hath been said, he expressly terms Presbyters, in the first Passage, Church Rulers, and makes Bishops and *Præsides Ecclesiarum* to be the same; and so Bishops and Presbyters are reciprocal Terms, and the Name Doctor is only Exegetick of the Word Bishop, and both of the same Import.

Justin Martyr, who flourished about the middle of the second Century, relates, That in each Assembly there was one who was termed *President*, that preached, prayed and consecrate the Eucharistical Elements, which were distributed by the Deacons to such as were present, and sent to those that were absent. From this Passage, the famous *Blondel* remarks, That the ancient Order instituted by the Apostle *Paul*, practised in the Days of *Clement* and *Polycarp*, was continued in the Days of *Justin*: And it is a plain Case, that in each Christian Assembly he only mentions two Orders of Church Officers, the *President* and *Deacons*, without so much as ever hinting a middle Order between these.

And tho' it be alledged that even in the second Century, *Ireneus* was Bishop of *Lyons*; yet it must be remembred, that the very Essence and Nature of a Bishop was no more, according to the Mind of the Ancients, but the first *Presbyter*; that is, the *Moderator* or *Preses*, as is to be seen from *Hilary* and Others, on first *Timothy* 3. Besides, *Ireneus* himself did not imagine that *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were two distinct Orders of Church Officers; for he ascribes the preserving the Apostolical Doctrine to the Succession of Presbyters, which before he had done to Bishops, his Words are,

I i

* *When*

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* *When we appeal to that Tradition which is from the Apostles, by the Succession of Presbyters in the Church; they reject this Tradition, saying they are not only wiser than the Presbyters, but even than the Apostles themselves. But this is not all, the same Ancient Writer asserts not only the Succession of Presbyters to the Apostles, but at the same Time makes the Successio Episcopatus to belong to the Presbyters also. His Words are, † Wherefore it is necessary to obey the Presbyters in the Church, these that have their Succession from the Apostles, as they who with the Succession of the Episcopate, received the certain Gift of Truth, according to the good Will of the Father. It is surprising with what Confidence Men can plead an Episcopal Succession and Power above Presbyters from Irenæus, when he so expressly asserts the Succession to belong to Presbyters, and that Episcopacy which he speaks of also. Can any Man in Sincerity maintain, that he truly imagined, that Bishops, in a superior Order to Presbyters, were derived by an immediate Succession from the Apostles; and yet, at the same Time, that Bishops and Presbyters were one. Thus in his (a) Synodical Epistle, he calls Anicetus, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus, and Xistus, Presbyters, and that more than once; and yet in the mean Time they were Bishops of Rome. The Apostles were now all dead, and the Episcopal Cant of the Names Bishops and Presbyters being common during their Days, is of no Consideration: For still the Names are common;*

* Cum autem ad eam iterum Traditionem quæ est ab Apostolis, quæ per successiones Presbyterorum in Ecclesiis custoditur, provocant eos, qui adversantur traditioni, dicent se non solum Presbyteris, sed etiam Apostolis sapientiores. Adversus Hær. L. 3. Cap. 2. † Quapropter illis qui sunt in Ecclesia Presbyteris obedire oportet, his qui successionem habent ab Apostolis, sicut ostendimus, qui cum Episcopatus successionem, charissima veritatis certum secundum placitum Patris acceperunt. Idem Lib. 4. Cap. 43. (a) Euseb. Hist. Eccl. L. 5. Cap. 14.

mon; and not only so, but the Presbyters are denominate the Successors of the Apostles, and to them belong'd the Episcopate. The Learned Author (b) of the *Critical History of England*, is not ashamed to say; tho' a Member of that Church, "If as *Bionius* says in 1. Can. Apostolical, the Names of Bishop and Presbyter were promiscuously used for 200 Years after Christ; why do not they distinguish [*the Jure Divino Episcopali-ans*] between the Divine Right proceeding from the real Gift of the Holy Ghost in the Exercise of the Ministerial Function, whether Bishop or Presbyter, which is intirely Spiritual, and the Right which the Law gives with respect to Temporals?" But to proceed, the former Author says in another Place*, *We must withdraw from these Presbyters who serve their Lusts, and, having not the Fear of God in their Hearts, condemn others, and are lifted up with the Dignity of the first Seat; but adhere to those who keep the Doctrine of the Apostles, and also, with the Order of Presbyters, shew sound Speech and a blameless Conversation.* From this it is easy to perceive, that *Irenaus's* great Scope is, not to prove the Succession of Persons in the Apostolical Power, but a Succession in that Doctrine which was delivered by them, and committed to writing. And therefore he immediately adds, *Such Presbyters doth the Church nourish, concerning whom also the Prophet says, I will give thee thy Princes in Peace, and thy Bishops in Righteousness.*

I i 2

ness.

(b) Vol 1 P. 214. * Presbyteri qui servant suis voluptatibus, et non proponunt timorem Dei in suis cordibus, sed contumelias agunt reliquos, et principalis confessionis tumore elati sunt, --- ab omnibus igitur talibus abstinere oportet, & adherere vero his, qui & Apostolorum doctrinam custodiunt, & cum Presbyterii ordine sermonem sanum, & conversationem sine offensâ præstant --- Tales Presbyteros nutrit Ecclesia, de quibus & propheta ait, & dato principes tuos in Pace, & Episcopos tuos in justitiâ, --- Iren. Lib. 4. Ch. 44.

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ness. And of them the Lord says, *Who is then a faithful and wise servant, whom the Lord hath made Ruler over his Household, to give them Meat in due Season. Blessed is that Servant whom the Lord when he cometh, shall find so doing. And yet more fully, † All this Speech or Doctrine will be evident to him who reads the Scripture diligently, among these Presbyters who are in the Church, with whom the Apostles Doctrine is to be found as we have shown. And in his Letter to Victor, written about the Year 190, he has these Words, * The Presbyters who presided over the Church in which thou presidest, before Soter, we mean Anicetus, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus and Xistus, neither observ'd [Easter on the 14. Day of the Month] nor enjoyn'd the Observation thereof to Posterity. --- But the same Presbyters, who went before thee, sent the Eucharist to their Brethren in those Parishes, who observed it after their own Way. --- Neither did Polycarp persuade Anicetus to this Observance, who was for adhering to the Custom of those Presbyters who went before him. From all which it is evident, that the Author's great Scope was, to shew a Succession in the Apostolical Doctrine, and not a Succession of Persons in the Apostolical Power; and as to any Personal Succession, he plainly gives it to Presbyters, and in the easiest Terms shews, that these Presbyters were Bishops, that *Isaiah's* Words concerning Bishops belonged to Presbyters, and that the Bishops of *Rome* before the Time of *Victor* were nothing else but Presbyters, in a Word, that *Anicetus* observed the Presbyters; that had gone before him. Will any sober Judgment, from these Testimonies of *Irenaeus*, be able to*

† Omnis sermo ei constitit. &c. Idem Lib. 4. Cap. 52. * Qui ante Soterem Presbyteri Ecclesiae praefuerunt, cui nunc praesides, Anicetum dicimus, & Pium, & Hyginum, & Telesphorum, & Xistum, neque ipsi sic observant, nec posteris suis praeceperunt. --- &c. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. Lib. 5. Cap. 23.

to determine the Point of Succession, so as to make it clear to the judicious Considerer, and determine what that Power was, which those Persons were possessed of, whom he mentions in his Successions, and sometimes terms *Bishops*, sometimes *Presbyters*. Presbyters are expressly said to be Successors of the Apostles in their Doctrine; but it will be more than difficult to produce the shew of an Argument, that they succeeded to their Power, or make it appear that these Persons had a Jurisdiction over Presbyters, who themselves were but Presbyters. Thus, as for *Irenæus's* being called Bishop of *Lyons*, I look upon it to be no more than that he was their first *Presbyter*, Preses or Moderator; and this is all that can be said of *Linus*, *Anacletus* and *Clement* their being Bishops of *Rome*, and I much Question if *Victor* himself was any more, however much the haughtiness of his Spirit might have induced him to aspire. Thus then, supposing the Catalogues given us of the *Succession of Persons* to be good, and that all the Ancients agreed in their Story, it will not thence follow, that these Bishops were Church Monarchs, or that they had jurisdictional Power over Presbyters. As I observed in the beginning, the Learned *Stillingfleet* gives us a clear Instance, that all this was consistent with a Parity of Power, from the *Archontes* at *Athens*, and the *Ephori* at *Lacedemon*; the Succession was reckon'd by the *Archon* or *Ephorus*, tho' he had no Power over the rest. From this he concludes, "That mere Succession of some single Persons named above the rest, in the Successions in Apostolical Churches, cannot inforce any Superiority of Power in the Persons so named, above others, supposed to be as joynt Governors of the Churches with them." I shall give the Testi-

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mony of two Canonists, who are of the highest Character among the *Papists*, who freely confess that in the first Times of Christianity, the Church was govern'd by a common Council, and that Ordination and Government were in the Hands of Presbyters. The first is * *Gratian*, who says, *We call the sacred Orders the Diaconate and Presbyterate; these only the primitive Church is said to have had.* And † *Joannes Semeca*, in his Gloss on the Canon Law, *They say indeed that in the first primitive Church, the Office of Bishops and Priests, and their Names were common; --- but in the second primitive Church, both Names and Offices began to be distinguished.* From these two noted Writers among the *Romans*, it is easy to perceive, that there was a Time when there was a first Primitive Church, in which the Presbyters acted in common, and had the sole Power of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, and that both the Office and Names of Bishops and Presbyters were common. The same was the Judgment of the *Master of the Sentences*, who says, || *with the Ancients, Bishops and Presbyters were the same.* He adds, *The Canons excellently judge, that there are only two sacred Orders, viz. the Diaconate and Presbyterate, because these alone the primitive Church is said to have had, and for these only we have the Authority of the Apostle.* Thus it is clear, that originally and by Apostolical Institution, Presbyters and Bishops were the same both in Office and Character; and consequently whatever Change

* *Sacros ordinavit* hic Diaconatum & Presbyteratum: hos quidem solos Ecclesia primitiva habuisse dicitur. Dist. 60. C. null. ex urbe Papa. Dicunt quidem quod in Ecclesia primâ primitivâ, commune erat Officium Episcoporum & sacerdotum, & nomina erant communia; --- sed in secundâ primitivâ cœperunt distingui & Nomine & Officia, &c. Dist. 95. C. legimus. || *Apud veteres idem Episcopi & Presbyteri fuerunt.* --- Excellentes Canones duos tantum sacros ordines appellari censent, Diaconatus sc. & Presbyteratus: quia hos solos primitivâ Ecclesiâ legitur habuisse, & de his solum præceptum Apostoli habet. Lib. 4. Dist. 247.

Change might at any Time obtain after the close of the inspired Age, it can never bear the Name of a *Jus Divinum*.

From what has been said we may see the inconclusiveness of the Argument adduced by the Episcopalians, upon the Head of the *Line of Succession*; and I must further add, that it doth not appear from any Writer in the second Century, that those who had the Name of Bishop ascribed to them in the Ancient Catalogues, were any more but the *Præsides* or Moderators of their Presbyteries. That these had a Precedency of mere Order or Decency, we shall not Question; but that they were possessed of a jurisdictional Power over Presbyters, is what no Writer in that Age gives Countenance to, or a suitable Proof of. The main Thing insisted upon during this Period of Time, is the *Ignatian Bishops*, which is sufficiently blasted by the Learned *Jamieson*, in his *Nazianzeni Querela*, and by what is already said. The same Author has no less made it appear in his *Cyprianus Isotimus*, that the Writers in the third Century all acknowledged that by Divine Institution there were only Bishops or Presbyters and Deacons; and so whatever Change had gradually crept in in that Age, it was still a received Principle among them, that it had its rise from Custom, the Deed of Men, and not from Christ. It is plain from *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who flourished in the close of the second Century, that there were but two Orders of Church Officers, and the utmost that can be concluded from him, is, that the Name *Bishop* was sometimes appropriated to the *Preses* or Moderator of the Bench of Presbyters. This is clearly made good by a Passage quoted from him by the judicious *Blondel* (a), namely,

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That

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That these Offices are an Imitation of the Angelical Glory, and of that Dispensation, which, as the Scripture says, they wait for, who, treading in the Steps of the Apostles, live in the Perfection of Evangelical Righteousness; for these the Apostle writes shall be taken up into the Clouds, and there first as Deacons attend, and then according to the Process or next Station of Glory, be admitted into the Presbytery. He elsewhere (a) says, In the Church the Presbyters bear that Office which makes Men better, the Deacons, that which is performed in waiting upon and serving them. The Angels perform both these Services to God in ordering Things that are on Earth. From which Passages Blondel observes, that Clement acknowledges only two Orders of Ecclesiastick Officers, namely, that of Presbyters and Deacons. For, says he, "Clement gives the Name of Presbyter to " that Servant of Christ, to whose Care St. John " had committed the * young Man, and whom " he had stiled Bishop. For when he affirms, the " Apostle had used these Words: O Bishop restore " what I committed unto your Charge; And a little " after, writing in St. John's Stile, says, Looking " to the Bishop who was over them all, --- he said, " I commit this young Man to thy Care; he adds, --- " The Presbyter therefore having received him, --- " &c." This clearly enough proves that even in Clement's Time, the Names Bishop and Presbyter were common. Besides, it is manifest, he only acknowledges two Angelical and Ecclesiastical Ministers, which is evident from the Passages already mentioned. For according to him, as Presbyters were design'd to improve the Minds of Men by Instruction, and the Deacons were to be employed in Ministering to them in external Concerns; so the

(a) Ubi Sup. Strom. Lib. 7. * Vide Euseb. Lib. 3, Cap. 20.

the Angels perform these Services to God; by waiting on him and doing his Will, they may be conceived as performing the Work of Deacons; or under that Notion of Resemblance, and in their being considered as instructing Men, they bear a Resemblance to Presbyters. Thus, however we conceive the Words of *Clement*, it is plain, he makes but two Orders or Stations of Ecclesiastick Officers. And what is further quoted from him by the forenamed Author (a), serves to clear this, when he says, *He is in Truth a Presbyter of the Church, and a Minister of the Will of God, who does and teaches the Things of the Lord; not ordained by Men, or esteemed just, because a Presbyter, but because just, therefore received into the Presbytery, altho' here he be not honoured with the first Seat on Earth, &c.* Thus according to him both Bishops and Presbyters were Members of the same Presbytery; and their Order according to Divine Institution was the same; only he who was the *Preses* had the first or chiefeft Seat in the Senate or Bench of Presbyters. For what Sense were there in these Words, *He is really a Presbyter, --- tho' he is not honoured with the first Seat on Earth*; except he believed every one of that Bench of Presbyters had equal Power and Honour with him who was possessed of the chief Seat as to Office and Character, and that all that the one had above the rest, was only a Precedency of mere Order, and what Decency required. And it is observable, that tho' the Apostle *Peter* is constantly mentioned in the Front of the rest in the Sacred Catalogues, and even in those Actions wherein he was only joyntly concerned with the rest of his Brethren, he is set down in the first Place in the Reports that were made; yet he

was

(a) Strom. L. 6, apud Blond. pag. 36.

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was in all respects on a perfect Level with them as to his Office, and they in Honour and Power equal to him. Besides, the same *Clement* who was a Presbyter in the Church of *Alexandria*, (a) says of himself and these in his Station, *We are Shepherds set over the Churches, according to the Example of the good Shepherd; but you are the Sheep.* By this it appears, that Presbyters were the Shepherds, Pastors or Rulers of this Church, and not a single Person or Bishop; which clearly makes it appear, that the Order of *Presbyter* and *Bishop* was at that Time the same.

And here it may not be improper to give the Words of *Jerom* †, with respect to the Constitution of the Church of *Alexandria*, namely, *The Reason why after this [the Writing of both the Epistles of John] one was chosen and set over the rest, was, that there might be a Remedy against Schism, lest every one drawing the Church of Christ after him, should cause Divisions therein. For, in Alexandria, from Mark the Evangelist, even to Heracles and Dionysius, the Presbyters still gave the Name of Bishop to one elected among themselves, and placed him in a higher Seat; as if an Army should create a General, or the Deacons should choose one of themselves, whom they found to be laborious, and give him the Name of Arch-deacon.* From which Passage, it is evident as any Thing can be, That *Bishop*, when appropriate to a Person, denoted no more than the first Presbyter or *Præses* of an Assembly or Senate; and, that all the Pre-eminence he had over the rest, was only for Order's Sake, and had its Arise from the Presbyters themselves. The Scope of *Jerom*, in this Epistle, being to prove the Identity of *Presbyter* and *Bishop*, from the Practice of the *Alexandrian Church*,

(a) *Pædago. Lib. 1. Cap. 6.* † *Epist. ad Evagr.*

Church, it leaves no Room to imagine, that the Bishops there had any jurisdictional Power over the Presbyters. Remarkable are the Words of *Stillingsfleet* * on this Passage, "That learned Doctor, says he, who would perswade us, that the Presbyters only made Choice of the Person, but the Ordination was performed by other Bishops, would do well to tell us first who, and where these Bishops in *Egypt* were, who did consecrate or ordain the Bishop of *Alexandria*, after his Election by the Presbyters; especially while *Egypt* remained but one Province, under the Government of the *Præfectus Augustalis*. 2. How had this been in the least pertinent to *Jerom's* Purpose, to have made a particular Instance of the Church of *Alexandria*, for that which was common to all other Churches besides? For, the old Rule of the Canon Law for Bishops was, *Electio Clericorum est, Consensus Principis, petitio plebis*. 3. This Election of *Jerom's* must imply the conferring the Power and Authority where- by the Bishop acted, &c." It is a Matter beyond Question, that *Jerom* makes the Source of the Power of Bishops above Elders, to be from the free Choice of the Presbyters themselves, and not from any Apostolical Institution; which he elsewhere expresseth by *Consuetudo Ecclesiæ*, that is, the Custom of the Church, or voluntary Act of its Rulers. This is further manifest from his *Comment* on *Titus*, where he says, "Let us carefully Heed the Words of the Apostle, saying, *That thou mightest ordain Elders in every City, as I have appointed thee*. Who, discoursing on what follows, touching what Presbyters ought to be ordained,

* *Irenicon* Page. 274.

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" dain'd, says this, *If one be blameless, &c.* ----- A
 " Presbyter is therefore the same with a Bishop.
 " And before that, by the Devil's Instigation,
 " there were Parties in Religion; and it was said
 " among the People, *I am of Paul, I of Apollos,*
 " *and I of Cephas*, the Churches were governed
 " by the Common Counsel of Presbyters. But
 " after, ----- it was decreed in the whole World,
 " That one chosen from among the Presbyters
 " should be set over the rest, to whom all the Care
 " of the Church should pertain; and that the
 " Seeds of Schisms might be pluck'd up." Now,
 that he might clearly establish that Bishops and
 Presbyters were indeed one and the same, he af-
 terwards adduceth many pregnant Scriptures for
 that Purpose, which, in the strongest Terms con-
 clude what he design'd. This Testimony is fully
 vindicated from the Cavils of the Episcopalians,
 by the Learned * *Blondel* and † *Stillingsfleet*, and
 since, by our Country-man || *Mr. Jamieson*, and
 ‡ *Mr. Anderson*, to whom I refer the Reader.
 Again, *Ambrose*, or rather *Hilary*, is of the same
 Mind with *Jerom*, as will appear from his *Comment*
 on 1 *Tim.* 3. But, at present, I shall only menti-
 on a few Words from him, on *Eph.* 4. 11. namely,
 " But when the succeeding Presbyters began to be
 " unworthy to hold the first Place, the Method
 " was altered, on the Deliberation of a Council;
 " so that it was appointed by the Judgment of
 " many Priests, that not the Order of *ones stand-*
 " *ing*, but *personal Merit* should make a Bishop."
 By this it is manifest, That all that we are to un-
 derstand by a *Bishop*, in the Time of which *Hilary*
 speaks,

* *Apol.* Pag. 1. 2. 3. &c. † *Irenicon*, Pag. 273, &c. || *Nazianzen*.
Quæst. Sect. 8. ‡ *Def. of Fresh.* Sect. 5. Pag. 169.

speaks, was only the *Præses* or Moderator of an Ecclesiastick Senate; which he, on the Text above mentioned, clearly evinces, when he says, The Ordination of Bishops and Presbyters were the same. From all which it is clear, that there was a Time in which both the Names and Office of Bishops and Presbyters were the same. And it is to be noted, That *Hilary* was a *Deacon* in the Church of *Rome*, and his Commentary was cited with Applause by *Austin*, which is not to be thought he would have done, if what is therein narrated had not been the received Notion of the Church at that Time, *namely*, that Originally Bishops and Presbyters were one. But indeed *Austin* * is express to the Full of the same Thing, when he says, *According to these Names of Honour, which are brought in Fashion by the Custom of the Church, the Office of a Bishop is greater than that of a Presbyter.* The Learned Bishop *Jewel* † translates this Passage, *The Office of a Bishop is above the Office of a Priest, not by the Authority of the Scripture, but after the Names of Honour, which, thro' the Custom of the Church, have now obtain'd.* This makes it further evident, That the Difference between Episcopacy and Presbytery had its Rise from the Custom of the Church, which appropriate the Name of greater Honour to such Persons as were raised above others: But this will never make that Constitution to be a *Jus Divinum*, which cannot bring the Authority of the Sacred Oracles along with it.

SECT.

* Epist. 19. ad Hieron. † Def. Apol. Pag. 122, 123.

S E C T. III.

That there was a Change made in the Constitution of the Church, from what obtain'd in the Apostolick Age, and some Time after. How and when this Change was made. It was gradual. Of the introducing constant Moderators, and appropriating to them the Name of Bishop. Of Jerom's toto orbe decretum, and Hilary's Prospiciente Concilio, before the End of the Second Century.

IT being manifest from what hath been said, That there was a Change made in the Constitution of the Church, from what obtain'd in the Apostolick Age, and some Time after; it may be enquired, How could this fall out, without some remarkable Opposition made unto it, and what was the Time in which it was made. In Answer to this; It is plain in Fact, that there was a Change made; and this is even acknowledged by many of the most zealous Defenders of Episcopacy, as will appear from the *Appendix*. Besides, it is wholly ridiculous for Men to dispute against a Matter of Fact which is so clear from the Writers in every Age; tho' it cannot be so easily accounted for, how and when it came to pass. The pitiful Pretences the Episcopalians make on this Point, are sufficiently answered by Mr. *Jamieson* and Mr. *Anderson*. Therefore, all that I shall further add on this Head is, to give the most rational Account I can, how and when it was that this Change did happen. That it is a Matter so difficult precisely to determine this Point, arises from the Defect of ancient Writings in those Times which came next after the Apostles. This was the Occasion which
made

made *Eusebius* complain, in the Proem to his Ecclesiastical History, That he was straitned for Light to guide him in what he wrote of those early Times. Besides, that which renders the Thing more hard and difficult, is, because the Change appears to have been gradual, and many of their Writings which were in the Beginning of the Second Century, are either spurious, or otherwise vitiate, and made to bear the Sense that was agreeable to after Times. But we shall not insist on this, but proceed.

What *Cicero* spoke in another Case, is certainly applicable on the present Head, namely, *When Men are equal in Dignity, one only can have the first Place.* Thus, I judge it a Matter obvious to Reason and the Light of Nature, that when there is a College of Equals in one Court of Judicature, there must, of Necessity, be one who acts the Part of President, and collects the Mind of his Brethren, in order to bring Matters before them to a Period and Issue. This much the very Rules of Decency and Order clearly evince, as being necessary to preserve a becoming Regularity, and promote the Dispatch of Affairs in Dependance before a Court made up of many Members, whose Powers stand on an equal Footing. So, while the Apostles were together at *Jerusalem*, and in a joynt Course of Management governed that Church, it is reasonable to believe, there was one of their Number, who acted the Part of *Præses* or Moderator in their Senate or Presbytery. It is a received Truth among all sound Protestants, that the Twelve Apostles were perfectly equal in Honour and Power, and there was none of them had a Superiority of Jurisdiction over the rest, as the Papists plead. But this does not hinder, but one of them might be

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be *Preses* in their Assemblies, or the Mouth of the rest in their Publick Meetings. Thus, it is generally thought by the Ancients (on what Grounds, I do not determine, or how justly) that *Peter* was he who, for ordinary, presided in the Bench of the Holy Apostles. And so *Chrysostom* * says, *See the Concord of the Apostles, for they yield unto him the Speech, for they could not all speak.* And *Jerom* † saith, *One is chosen among the Twelve, that a Head being appointed, an Occasion of Schism might be taken away.* All that is pleaded here, may be admitted as agreeable in the general; seeing it was useful to preserve Order, promote Expedition, and prevent Confusion or dilatory Obstruction in the Management of Affairs, and besides, might have a Tendency to maintain Concord, and exclude that Ambition or Affectation to be foremost, which is so very natural to Men. For, as all could not act first, or speak on proper Occasions, and guide Affairs, it was but expedient some one or other of them should undertake it, And that which seems to have induced the Ancients to give this Precedency to *Peter*, seems to arise, partly from the personal Excellency they apprehended to be in him, his Quickness of Perception, Boldness of Spirit, Readiness of Speech, fervent Zeal for the Service of his Lord, and the Resolution and Activity he showed on all Occasions, which is frequently observed by *Cyril* || and *Chrysostom* ‡, partly from the Esteem and Repute they conceived to belong to him, arising from his personal Qualifications, on which Account they stile him the *Chief*, *Prince* and *Head* of the Apostles, as *Albanasius* * in his
Dis-

* In Acts 2. 14. † In Jovin. L. 1. C. 14. || Cyril in Joan. 21. 15.
‡ Chrysost in Joan. Ora. 12. & 15. Tom. 5. Ibid. Ora. 24. * Albanas.
Disp. con. Ari. Page 122.

Disputation against *Arius*; and partly, because they believed *Peter* to be of the first Standing among the Apostles, or he that was first called to that Office, and nominate by our Lord to be one of the Twelve. Thus, he is said to have been the first Person in our Lord's Eye for the Apostolical Office, by *Epiphanius* †; the first that did believe, and the Prince or first Man of the Apostleship by *Hilary* ‡; the first whom our Lord chose, by *Cyprian* ||; and *Basil* * says, He was, for Judgment, preferred to all the Disciples: And on the same Grounds I conceive it is, that *Jerom* † terms him and his Brother *Andrew*, *Principes Apostolorum*, the First of the Apostles, which the frequent Use of the Latin Word *Princeps* will bear. Besides, this Priority was frequently ascrib'd to *Peter* by the Ancients, on Account of his Faith and Confession, in which he outstriped his Brethren. And so * *Hilary* saith, *He obtain'd supereminent Glory by the Confession of his Blessed Faith*: And || *Ambrose*, *Because he alone of all the rest professeth his Love*, John 21. *Therefore he is preferred above all*. To these I shall only add, that *Jerom*, on Account of his Age, he being of more Years than any of the rest of the Apostles, and a married Person before his Call, reckons this to be the Reason wherefore he was preferred to the Apostle *John* the Beloved Disciple. His Words are, † *Why was St. John elected, being a Batchelor; it was deferred to Age, because Peter was Elder; that a Youth, and almost a Boy, might not be preferred before Men of good Age*. Now, all this, tho' it were granted to *Peter*, is a quite different Thing from a Superiority of Power,

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† Epiph. Hær. 51. ‡ Hilary in Matt. Con. 7. || Cyprian Epist. 1. * Basil, de Judic. Dei. T. 2. Pag. 268. † Jerom. in Jovin. 1. * De Trin. 4. 6. Page 121. || In Luc. Cap. ult. ‡ In Jovin. 1. 14.

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Command or Jurisdiction over the rest of his Brethren; they were, in this Respect, every Way equal, or, as *Chrysostom* || speaks, *Were all in common intrusted with the whole World, and had the Care of all Nations.* There is one Thing more that might have induced the Ancients to give the Preference to *Peter*, namely, that he is constantly, in all the Catalogues, set down in the Front of all the rest, and even in these Actions that were joyn'tly managed, he is still the first mention'd in the Report. *

Now, from these Passages, we may come to frame some Notion of the received Opinion the Fathers had of *Peter*, and his Preference to the rest of his Brethren; namely, from his personal Excellency, Reputation and Esteem, and particularly, his being first in the Apostleship, and of the greatest Age of all that Blessed Fraternity, he was preferred to be their *Prolocutor* or *Præses* in their Assemblies and Publick Transactions. And so, according to the View they had of the Order observed among the Apostles, when together in the first Mother Church in *Jerusalem*, it is reasonable to conceive they model'd themselves afterwards, and consequently, established a constant Moderator in their Presbyteries, to resemble *Peter* among the Apostles. This much is easy to be gathered from many Passages in *Cyprian*, particularly when dehorting from the Schism of *Novatian*, he has these Words, † “ This comes to pass, because Men re-
“ turn

|| *Tom.* 5 *Orat.* 47. in 2 *Cor.* 11. 28. * *Matt.* 10. 2. *Mark* 3. 17. *Luke* 6. 14. *Acts* 1. 13. *John* 21. 2. † Hoc eo fit, dum ad Veritatis Originem non reditur, nec Caput quæritur, nec Magistri Cœlestis Doctrina servatur. Quæ si quis consideret & examiner, tractatu longo atque Argumentis opus non est, probatio est ad fidem facilis compendio Veritatis. Loquitur Dominus ad Petrum: Ego tibi dico, &c. Et iterum eidem post Resurrectionem suam dicit, Pasce oves meas Super unum ædificat Ecclesiam suam; et quamvis Apostolis omnibus parem potestatem

“ turn not to the Original of Truth, seek not the
 “ Head, and observe not the Doctrine of our Hea-
 “ venly Master; which, if we consider and exa-
 “ mine, there is no Need of longer Discourse or
 “ Arguments; there is a short and easy Way to
 “ come to the Perswasion of the Truth: He speaks
 “ to Peter: *I say to thee, thou art Peter, and upon*
 “ *this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates*
 “ *of Hell shall not prevail against it: And I will*
 “ *give thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and*
 “ *whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound*
 “ *in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on*
 “ *Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* He saith to the
 “ same Person, after his Resurrection, *Feed my*
 “ *Sheep.* He buildeth his Church upon One.
 “ And albeit he gave the Apostles equal Power,
 “ and saith, *As the Father sent me, even so I send*
 “ *you, receive the Holy Ghost: Whosoever's Sins ye*
 “ *remit, they are remitted unto them; and whoso-*
 “ *ever's Sins ye retain, they are retained:* Yet that
 “ he might manifest Unity, he ordered by his
 “ Authority, that the Original of the same Unity
 “ should take its Beginning from One. For sure-
 “ ly the rest of the Apostles were the same that
 “ Peter was, all of them being endowed with the
 “ same Honour and Power: But the Beginning
 “ ariseth from Unity, that the Church might be
 “ declared to be One.” Tho' this Passage of Cy-
 prian, and the Notion he has on these Scriptures,
 is *Mystical*, and, as Dr. Barrow* observes, *Unsolid*;
 yet it is clear as any Thing can be, he maintains

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tem tribuat, & dicat: Sicut misit me Pater, --- &c. Tamen Unitatem manifestaret, unitatis ejusdem Originem ab uno incipientem suâ autoritate disposuit: Hoc erant utique & ceteri Apostoli, quod fuit Petrus, pari Consortio pradii & Honois & Potestatis, sed exordium ab Unitate proficiscitur, ut Ecclesia una monstretur. De Unit. Eccles. Cap. 3. * Pope's Suprem. Page 46.

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the Equality of all the Apostles in Honour and Power; and so, if he shall not be said to contradict himself, all the Primacy he ascribes unto *Peter*, is only that of mere Order or Place. And consequently, that Bishops had no more Power over Presbyters, than *Peter* over the rest of the Apostles, that is, they were of equal Power and Honour, as the Apostles were among themselves. This Instance was so glaring, that even *Dodwel* is made to say †, *It is enough to our Purpose, that, at the least, Cyprian had that Power over the Presbyters, which he gave to Peter over the rest of the Apostles.* What was this; but, at most, a Precedency of mere Order or Decency, seeing, according to himself, the rest of the Apostles were equal to him in Honour and Power. And here I cannot miss to give the Words of the Learned Dr. *Reynolds* *, on this Passage, namely, *Unless you will make Cyprian to contradict himself within a few Lines, he proves the Equality of all the Apostles, rather than the Superiority of one above the rest: Or, if you give him the Primacy in that Place (----) it is only a Primacy of Order, and a Priority of Place; in all other Things, as in the Power of binding and loosing Sins, in feeding the Flock of Christ, they did Share alike.* Thus, it is clear, and (if there were Need) might be shown from several other Passages in *Cyprian*, That the Prerogative of Bishops over Presbyters had its Rise from *Peter's* imagin'd Primacy over the rest of the Apostles, whom, at the same Time, he believed and maintain'd to be *equal* in Honour and Power, and consequently *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were the same. On the same Bottom it was, that *Firmili-*
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† Quamquam nostrum Institutum quod attinet, abundè sufficit ut eum solum obtinuerit *Præmatum*, quem S. Petro tribuit in reliquos Apostolos Dist. 7. §. 15. * Confer. with *Hart*, Pag. 165.

an, *Origen* and others in that Age founded the Episcopal Dignity, as is fully manifested, and clearly demonstrate by the Learned *Jamieson* †: And that all of them believed a Parity among Pastors and Presbyters was of Divine Institution, is made no less manifest by the same Author. Thus, we may easily perceive from what hath been said, that the *Præsides* of the Churches in the third Century, made it their great Care, to monopolize the greatest Part of the Pastoral Power, and the Name of Bishop to themselves; and so, this Point being once obtain'd, it was the more easy for them to enhance all the Pastoral Rights, Privileges and Honours, which originally belong'd to that Character. But still it must be remembred how consistently they acted in this Matter, when the *Basis* on which they establish'd their Prerogative, was on *Peter's* Primacy over the rest of the Apostles, who were equal to him in Honour and Power. Thus, it being evident, That the first Maintainers of the Episcopal Dignity had the Primacy of *Peter* over the rest of the Apostles in their Eye, and looked on his presiding among his Brethren, to be the Rule and Measure of their Model and Scheme of Government, it makes it easy to conceive, that this Notion gave them a Handle for fixt and Constant Moderators in Presbyteries, and that these, for ordinary, if not always, for the most of the Second Century, were such as were of the greatest Age, or longest standing in the Ministry, which they conceived *Peter* to be among the Apostles.

Now, having considered the Matter so far, the next Thing to be enquired into for clearing this Head, is, to give some Account of the Time in which these *Præsides* began to assume a Power over

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their

† Cypr. Mor. C. 4.

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their Fellow Presbyters and Colleagues in the Bench. In our Enquiry into this, we must have a Recourse to *Jerom's Toto orbe decretum est*, and *Hilary's Prospiciente Concilio*. When this was, is the Question; for both these ancient Writers seem to have an Eye to the same Period of Time, and agree, that before there was a Change made, there was no Difference between *Bishop* and *Presbyter*. That this was not so early as the Apostolick Age, or during the Time of the Apostle *Paul*, is evident from the Writings of the *New Testament*, and many of the Ancients themselves. For, tho' *Jerom* alludes to the Apostle's Words, *I am of Paul, and I of Cephas*; yet it is made clear to a Demonstration by *Blondel* *, that it never entred into his Mind, That the Change was made so soon, as to have its Commencement from the first Division that arose in the Church of *Corinth*. To establish this Notion, contradicts the whole Context of *Jerom's* Reasoning on the Epistle to *Titus*, no less than his main Scope in his Epistles indited to *Oceanus* and *Evangrius*. This much is owned by *Stillingsfleet* †, and he adduces several unanswerable Arguments against this Conceit, and homologates these advanced by *Blondel*. Yea, it is manifest, that *Jerom's* Opinion was, That the Change made in the Church, by which Episcopacy was introduced, was but gradual; and so, after he said, *Decretum est toto orbe*, it is immediately added, *Paulatim verò (ut dissensionum Plantaria evellerentur) ad unum omnem sollicitudinem esse delatam*. From this, it plainly appears, That the Commencement and setting up of Episcopacy was not all at once, or by one Stroke or Act of any Universal Council brought into its full Being. The Schisms and Divisions that hap-
pened

* Apol. Page 3, 4. † Irenicon; Pag. 279, &c.

pened to fall out, gave Occasion, according to *Jerom*, to the making a Change in the Christian Church. So that there being a College of Presbyters set apart by the Apostles in remarkable Cities, for the maintaining of Order, there was a President among them, who moderate the Affairs of the Assembly, by bringing the Matters that were before them to an Issue, gathering their Voices, and keeping from Confusion; and yet had no Power over his Fellow Presbyters, the College of Elders still retaining their Jurisdictional Power. This being the Original State of Things, and the Constitution of the Church that was left by the Apostles; the Rise of *Schisms*, and the Increase of *Divisions* determined her to agree to make Choice of one out of their own Number, whom they judged duly qualified, and devolve on him the Exercise of Ordination and Jurisdiction; * but still so, as that his Powers were restricted, and he bound to act with the Consent and Concurrence of the College of Presbyters, in all Matters of Import and Publick Concern. This I conceive to be the real Sentiments of *Jerom*. And indeed it is not conceivable, that a Power which was originally lodged in a College of Presbyters, who were equally empowered to act in all Ecclesiastical Affairs, should at once be resigned up to any one of their own Number; This was gradually taken from them, by aspiring and subtile Men, till, at last, they were dispossessed of the whole. This was so small in its first Beginnings, that *Hilary* looks on it to be no more, but the making Choice of one duly qualified, to have the Precedency of mere Order in their Assemblies; whereas, before, he that was of the longest standing, came to it by Course. The

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* See Blond Apol. P. 200. Stilling. Iren. P. 353, &c.

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due Consideration of this gradual Advance of the Episcopal Power from such small Beginnings, makes it more hard and difficult, at so great a Distance of Time, to make a precise Determination of its real *Epocha*; especially, considering the Defect of Writings in those early Times. The Change could not be in the First Century, from what hath been already said; and besides, *Jerom*, in the Places above mention'd, brings Arguments, for establishing the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters, from the Second and Third Epistles of *John*, who is generally reckon'd to have lived till the End of that Age.

Thus then the Schisms which gave Occasion to the first bringing in of Episcopal Power, must be sought after in the second Century. And that we may come to the clearest Determination of this Point, that the Nature of the Thing will allow, it must be observed, that during the second Age of the Christian World, there were Provincial Assemblies, or a Combination of the Rulers of neighbouring Churches held once or twice a Year, for debating all Causes of publick Concern, and the laying down such Rules as were most conducive to the Advancement of the common Interest of Christianity. Of these *Tertullian* * speaks, who lived in that Age, and the 38 Canon, † of these which are commonly called *Apostolical*, and accounted to have been composed during that Century. From this it appears, that the primitive Church had a Care and Concern to maintain Order

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* Aguntur Præcepta per Gracías illas, certis in locis, Concilia ex universis Ecclesiis, per quæ & altiora quæq. tractantur, & ipsa Representatio Nominis Christiani magnâ veneratione celebratur. *Tertul. de Jejanio Adver. Pſych.* † Δευτέρον του έτους σύνοδος γινέσθω τῶν ἐπισκόπων, καὶ ἀνακρινέτωσαν τὰ δογματὰ τῆς εὐσεβείας καὶ τὰς ἡμ. π. ὁρῶντες, ἐκκλησιαστικῆς ἀντιλογίας διαλυέτωσαν. Canon. Apost. C. 38.

and Unity among all its Members, and keep a close Correspondence among the several Rulers thereof. For this End, they not only had a *Formula* of Writing, which is to be seen in *Justellus's* Notes on the Book of Canons of the Church of *Africk*; but also Assemblies of the Bishops in the same Province, or neighbouring Places. And if we consider what the same *Tertullian* says in another Place, observed by our judicious *Jamieson*, it will appear there was a Council, or from what hath been just now noted, a Conjunction and mutual Correspondency of Ecclesiastical Senates, whether Montanists or Catholicks, that judged the Book * called *Pastor* to be among these which were not Canonical. This universal Correspondency and Agreement in one Thing, which *Tertullian* calls *Omni Consilio Ecclesiarum*, I take to be of the same Import with *Jerome's* *Toto orbe decretum*, and *Hilary's* *Prospiciente Concilio*. And so these Phrases can carry no more in them, but that the Assemblies of many distinct Churches came by a mutual Correspondency and Agreement to determine one should be chosen by the Bench of Presbyters, who should have the first Seat, and be the stated *Preses* in their Class or Presbytery, and have the Name of Bishop appropriated to him, and some small Degree of Power and Trust lodged in him beyond his Brethren, for the preventing of Schisms. This Way of Correspondency was used in the primitive Church, and hereby they used to maintain the Unity of Faith, Charity and Discipline. Thus the Eastern Churches give an Account to the other Churches, what they had done against

* Sed cederem tibi, si scriptura Pastoris, quæ sola mæchos amat, divino Instrumento meruisset incidi, si non ab *omni Consilio Ecclesiarum*, etiam vestiarum, inter Apocrypha & falsa judicaretur. Tert. de Pudic. Cap. 10.

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against *Paulus Samosatenus*, Euseb. L. 7. C. 29. And with respect unto this universal Correspondence, † *Cyprian* says, *Which Letters are sent all the World over, and brought to the Notice of all the Churches, and of all the Brethren.* A further Instance of this we may learn from *Optatus* ‡, who has these Words, *Siricius who is our Companion and fellow Labourer, with whom the whole World, by the mutual or communicatory Letters, agree together with us in one common Society.* I shall only add another Passage for clearing this Point, from the Synod of *Chalcedon* ||, “ So they who afterwards in all Places and several “ Ways were gathered together against the Inno- “ vations of Hereticks, give their common Opini- “ on in Behalf of the Faith, as being of one Mind : “ What they had approved among themselves in “ a brotherly Way, that they clearly transmitted “ to those that were absent : And they who at the “ Council of *Sardis* had earnestly contended a- “ gainst the Remainders of *Arius*, sent their Judg- “ ment to those of the Eastern Churches : And “ they who had then discovered the Infection of “ *Apollinarius*. made their Opinion known to the “ *Western*”. Now from these Passages, we may reasonably gather, that *Jerom’s Decree through all the World, Hilary’s Council, or Synod’s ordering it, and Tertullians Councils or Synods of the Churches,* amount

† Epist. 52. ad Anton. ‡ Siricius, qui noster est socius, cum quo nobis totus orbis commercio formularum id unâ communionis societate concordant. Optat Lib. 2. P. 40. apud Barrow Pop. Sup. || ‘Ουτῶ; δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα πανταχῇ ποικιλῶ; ἐπὶ τοῖς τῶν αἱρετικῶν ἀποσπῶντες καὶ σιμασι κοῖνῃν ὡς σύμφυχοι τῇν ὑπὲρ τῆς πίστεως ψῆφον ἀπὲρ ἀδελφικῶς ἑαυτοῖς ἰδοκίμασαν, ταῦτα τρανῶς τοῖς ἀποῦσι διαπορθεύσαντες καὶ οἱ μὲν ἐκ Σαρδικῆς μετὰ τῶν Ἀρεῖς λειψάνων ἀγωνισάμενοι τοῖς ἐν ἀνατολῇ τῇν κρίσιν ἐξέπεμπον οἱ δὲ ἐν ταῦθα τῇν Ἀπολινάριε λύμην φωράσαντες, τοῖς ἐν δύσει τῇν ψῆφον ἐγνώριζον. Syn. Chalced. ad Imper. Conc. Chal. Pars 3. P. 468. apud Barrow,

mount to no more, than that there was a general Concert and Agreement among the Churches. And so the Time *Tertullian* must have an Eye to, with respect to the Meetings of these Synods in which the Book called *Pastor* was rejected, as being no Part of the Scripture Canon, must have been soon after the Rise of *Montanism*; seeing they agreed to the condemning of this Writing, as well as the Catholics; and his Book *de Pudicitia* was written in favours of the austere Discipline and Principles of *Montanus*, as well as that *de Jejuniis, de Monogamia, de Fugâ in Persecutione, & de Ecclasi*. And tho' the Passage quoted from him, wherein he mentions the condemning of the Book *Pastor* by all the Councils of the Churches, does not speak of the Change that was introduced into the Church, by setting up one to bear the Name of Bishop; yet *Jerom's universal Decree*, and *Hilary's Council*, cannot fall into any other Interval of Time, than that mentioned by *Tertullian*, there being no other Councils that we read of during that Century, and before him, besides those he speaks of. Thus it is most natural to think, that these very Councils or Synods, which by mutual Agreement condemned *Pastor*, introduced the Change of Government into the Church. *Tertullian* began to flourish in the Christian World about the Year 192. And the Passage quoted from him must have a Reference to some general Concert or Agreement which was gone into, not long before that Time, and after the Rise of *Montanism*. Now *Montanus* and his *Prophetesses* began to rage with Violence about the Year 170. and the eastern Synods were much vexed with them, as appears from the * Author *de Heresibus*, published by *Sirmundus*. And in the
Year

* Lib: 1.

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Year 173. there was a Synod held against *Montanus* and *Maximilian*, which is mentioned by *Stephen Baluzius* in his Supplement of the Councils, Page 6. In a Word, there were several Synods about that Time, between the Year 160. and 180. both in the Eastern Parts of the Christian World, and these towards the West, which are spoken of by *Eusebius*, and at some length set down from the 13 Chapter of his fifth Book to the 18 inclusively. These were the Times of the first remarkable Synods, and in which Schisms abounded; and so from these it is we must reckon the true *Epocha* of the first Foundation of Episcopal Government, and the Time wherein the Name *Bishop* came to be peculiarly appropriate to one Person, chosen out of the Bench of Presbyters. To add no more on this Head, the learned *Spanheim* † finds no certain Account of any remarkable Synod before the Year 160. excepting one which was held at *Pergamus* in the Year 152. against the Heresy of *Colabrafius*; and as for any others that are mentioned by some, he looks upon them as wholly uncertain. Thus much as to the Time in which the Change of Government was made in the Church, and the Way by which it was brought about.

SECT.

† Hist. Christ. Sect. 2. P. 680.

S E C T. IV.

A further Illustration of the gradual Increase of Episcopal Usurpation, and of Diminution of the original Rights and Powers of Presbyters. Of the Bishops of single Congregations. Of the Powers reserved to Presbyters by the Canons of ancient Councils.

HAVING proceeded thus far on the footing of Antiquity, I shall yet further subjoyn the following Particulars, for clearing and more fully establishing what hath been said in the preceeding Section.

And, 1. That the Change introduced into the Church by mutual Agreement, for plucking up the Seeds of Schisms, as *Jerom* speaks, was so very small in its first Beginnings, that it rather paved the Way for Episcopacy, gave an Occasion to it, and opened a Door for its Entry, than actually established that Form of Government. For all that *Hilary* says in the forementioned Passage, is, that instead of the oldest Ministers regularly coming into the Chair, and having the Order of *Præses* in the Presbytery, it was ordered by a Synod or Council, that one duly qualified should be chosen to that Trust. And he that duly observes the Words and Series of *Jerom's* Reasoning on *Titus* 1. 5. will perceive there is no more intended. For after he has adduced several Arguments for proving the Identity of Presbyter and Bishop, and concludes they were originally of the same Office and Character; he adds, "And before that, by the Devil's Instinct, there were Factions in Religion," and

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“ and it was said among the People, *I am of Paul,*
 “ *I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas,* the Churches
 “ were governed by the common Counsel of Pres-
 “ byters. But after that, every one looked on
 “ them whom he baptized, as his own, not
 “ Christ’s, it was decreed throughout the whole
 “ World, that one elected from among the Pres-
 “ byters should be set over the Rest, to whom the
 “ Care of the Church should belong. that the
 “ Seeds of Division might be taken away. —
 “ These Things are alledged, that we may shew
 “ that among the Antients the Presbyters were the
 “ same with Bishops. But *by little and little,* the
 “ whole Care was devolved on One; that the Seeds
 “ of Division might be plucked up. As therefore
 “ Presbyters know, that by the *Custom of the*
 “ *Church,* they are subject to him who is set over
 “ them; so, let the Bishops know they are great-
 “ er than the Presbyters, rather by Custom, than
 “ the *Truth of the Lord’s Disposition or ordering,*
 “ and that they ought to govern the *Church in*
 “ *Common.*” From this Passage it is evident, if
 the latter Part be duly adverted unto, that the E-
 lection of one from among the Presbyters, was
 such a Change as gave an Occasion for the gradual
 Introduction of Episcopacy; but can never be un-
 derstood, as if it actually and at once possessed that
 Person with all the Power he was vested with in
 the Age in which *Jerom* lived. The Person thus
 elected improv’d the little Power he had commit-
 ted to him at first, and gradually advanced there-
 in, till he was possessed of all; and *Jerom* was so
 fully convinced of the Manner in which Bishops
 came by their raised Powers, that he expressly says,
it was rather by the Custom of the Church, than the
Truth of the Lord’s Disposition or ordering. And as
 for

for those who are so fond of the divine Original of Episcopacy, as to make *Jerom's Custom of the Church* to be Apostolical Tradition, they have a Mind to wrangle; for it is manifest, he means no more but the obtaining Practice of the Church in former Times, without any View to Apostolical Institution, but the contrary; seeing it is set in Opposition to the *Disposition or Ordering of the Lord*. This is convincingly evident from what He himself says in his Epistle to *Lucinus*; * *Let every Province abound in its own Sense, and account of the Ordinances of their Ancestors, as of Apostolical Laws*. Besides, the alledging of Apostolical Tradition by the Ancients is of no great Weight, for according to the common Rule of *Austin*, *Things that were generally in Use, and no certain Author assigned of them, were attribute to the Apostles*. And indeed he who has duly considered, how strongly Apostolical Tradition was alledged for the Observation of *Easter* by the Church of *Rome* on the one Hand, and the Eastern Churches on the other, will see little Certainty to depend on such Reports, or believe what was said on either Side. So that Apostolical Tradition in *Jerom's* Time was not the same with Apostolick Institution, nor did it denote any more but a bare Ecclesiastical Custom, as is observed by the judicious *Stillingfleet* *.

2. It must be observed, that tho' *Jerom* says, *It was decreed thro' the whole World*, that one elected from among the Presbyters should be set over the Rest; yet this did not universally obtain, so as that in every Church there were Bishops set over Presbyters, even in the fourth Century, and Age

III

* *Unaqueq; Provincia abundet in suo sensu, & praecepta majorum Leges Apostolicas arbitretur. Hieron. Epist. 20. ad Lucinum. || Iren. P. 256. &c.*

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in which *Ferom* lived. The Church of *Scotland* had the Gospel planted among them very early, and it was owned by their King, and many others of all Ranks, about the Year 203. Now from the first preaching of the Gospel in that Kingdom, which is reckon'd to have been sometime in the first Century, and the more publick owning of it by all Ranks about the Year 203, till the coming of *Palladius*, they were only governed by *Presbyters* or *Monks*. This is narrated in the strongest Terms by *Fordon*, † who says, *Before the coming of Palladius, the Scots, following the Custom of the primitive Church, had Teachers of the Faith and Dispensers of the Sacraments, who were only Presbyters or Monks.* And *Joannes* * *Major* says, *The Scots were instructed in the Faith by Priests and Monks without Bishops.* The first of these Passages is cited with Approbation by Bishop *Usher* (a); and on both of them Doctor *Stillingsfleet* (b) has these Words, “ So much mistaken was the Learned Man, who saith, That neither *Bede* nor “ any other affirms, that the *Scots* were formerly “ ruled by a *Presbytery*, or so much as that they “ had any *Presbyter* among them. Neither is it “ any Way sufficient to say, that these *Presbyters* “ did derive their Authority from some *Bishops*; “ for however, we see here a Church governed “ without such; or if they had any, they were “ only chosen from their *Culdei*, much after the “ Church of *Alexandria*, as *Hector Boethius* doth “ imply.” And because the Learned Doctor re-
fers

† Ante ejus [*Palladii*] adventum, habebant *Scoti* Fidei Doctores, ac Sacramentorum Ministratores, Presbyteros solummodo, vel Monachos, ritum sequentes Ecclesie Primitivæ. *Ford. L. 3. Cap. 8.* * Per Sacerdotes & Monachos, sine Episcopis *Scoti* in Fide erudiebantur. *Jo. Ma. de Gest. Scor. Lib. 2. Cap. 2.* (a) Bp. *Usher* de primord. Brit. Eccl. Pag. 796. (b) *Iren.* Pag. 375.

fers, to *Hætor Boethius* for the Conjecture he has in the last Clause of the Passage I have taken from him, I shall next subjoyn the Historians Words ||, namely, *Palladius was the first who exercised any Hierarchical Power among the Scots, being ordained their Bishop by the Pope, whereas before, their Priests were, by the Suffrage of the People, chosen out of the Monks and Gudees.* With this agree the Words of *Prosper Aquitaneus* in his *Chronicle* annexed to that of *Eusebius* and *Jerom*, viz. † *Palladius is ordained by Pope Celestine for the Scots who had already believed in Christ, and is sent to them to be their first Bishop.* And that this was received as a Truth among all, is asserted by Cardinal *Baron* (c) whose Words are, “ All Men agree that this Nation [*Scot-* “ *land*] had *Palladius* their first Bishop from Pope “ *Celestine*. ” He adds, “ Thus we are instructed “ how to refute these who alledge that *Sedulius* the “ Christian Poet, whom Pope *Gelasius* so much “ extols, had for his Master *Hildebert* the Arch- “ Bishop of the Scots : For, seeing even *Sedulius* “ himself lived in the Time of *Theodosius* the Em- “ peror, how could he have had, for his Master, “ *Hildebert* the Arch-Bishop of the Scots, seeing “ there was no Arch-Bishop ordained as yet in “ *Scotland*, and *Palladius* is without Doubt affirm- “ ed to have been the first Bishop of that Nation. ”

This Passage I have taken from our Learned *Jamieson* not having the Author before me, and its further confirmed from a noted *Antiquarian* in this Kingdom, namely, *Sir Thomas Craig* (d) in his *Scotland's Sovereignty asserted*, who has these Words,

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¶ Erat Palladius primus omnium qui apud Scotos sacrum egerunt Magistratum, a summo Pontifice Episcopus creatus: quum antea Populi Suffragiis, &c. *Sebt. Hist. Lib. 4.* † Ad Scotos in Christum credentes ordinatur a Papa Celestino Palladius, & primus Episcopus instituitur.

(c) See *Jamieson Nazian. Quer. Sect. 7.* (d) *Pag. 134.*

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“ To pass over that silly Fable of the three *Arch-Flamines*, and the Twenty eight *Flamines*; it is plain there was no Bishop in *Briton*, before *Palladius*, who is by the *English* themselves called the *Bishop of the Scots*; or if either the *Britons* or *English* have any, let them Name them, and at what Time they flourished.” Thus it is evident, that from the first planting of Christianity in *Scotland*, their Pastors lived all in Parity, without any Episcopal Government, till Pope *Celestine* sent *Palladius* to them, in the Year 430, or 431, which brings down the Commencement of any change in that Church, till the fifth Century, and clearly proves, they enjoyed *Presbytery* for upwards of 300 Years. And as this Church was well known in the Christian World in the Days of *Tertullian*, who says, † *That the Places of Britain to which the Romans could not have Access, are notwithstanding subject to Christ*; so, it is even granted by *Spotswood* (a) that the *Scotish* Bishops had no distinguishing Titles, before the Days of *Malcome* the III. who first divided the Country into Dioceses; and it is observable, that he is much diffculted to trace the smallest Footsteps of Episcopacy in *Scotland*, long after the Arrival of *Palladius*. He that inclines to see a full Dissertation on the first planting of Christianity in this Kingdom, and the long Continuance of the Presbyterian Government therein, may consult that Elaborate *Scotch Antiquarian* Sir * *James Dalrymple*. And from the whole, it is manifest, that *Jerom's* *De-ree through the whole World* is to be taken with a Limitation, and not constructed as if all the

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† *Loca Britannorum Romanis inaccessa, Christo tamen subdita. contra Iud. Cap. 7. (a) Hist. Pag. 4. * Dalrymple's Collections Chap. 4 & 5.*

Christian World had fallen in, and been on the Concert when there was a Change made in the Polity of the Church.

Again, the *Scythians* beyond *Ister*, from the Year 260, which was that of their Captivity under *Gallienus*, and the Time of their first Conversion to Christianity, till the 327. were governed by *Presbyters*; and so according to this, they were about 70 Years without any Bishop. For according to *Philostorgus* (a), the *Gothick* Churches were both planted and governed by *Presbyters*, and continued so till *Ulphilas* whom he designs their first Bishop. This Bishop was ordained by *Eusebius* and others that joyned him, at the Time of the change of their Government under *Constantine*.

It is further to be observed, that *Stillingsfleet* (b) gives it as his Judgment, that "There is great probability, that where Churches were planted by *Presbyters*, as the Church of *France* by *Andochius* and *Benignus*, that afterwards upon the Increase of Churches, and *Presbyters* to rule them, they did from among themselves choose one to be as the Bishop over them; as *Pothinus* was at *Lyons*; for we nowhere read in those early Plantations of Churches, that where there were *Presbyters* already, they sent to other Churches to derive their Episcopal Ordination from them." Besides, the Province of *Bavaria*, which was anciently inhabited by the *Boiarians*, was governed by *Presbyters* without Bishops, for any Thing that appears, from the Time of their first Conversion to the Christian Faith, till *Vivilo* was imposed on them by Pope *Zachary* about the Year 740. It is reckoned they were brought

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(a) *Philos. Lib. 2. Cap. 5. apud Blond. Apol. Pag. 365, &c.* (b) *Iren. Pag. 375.*

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to embrace the Gospel about the Year 540, and so it was 200 Years before they had any other Government among them save that of Presbytery. For *Bonifacius Mogunt* visited this Church, and found no Bishop among them save *Vivilo* who had been lately sent thither; to this *Boniface*, the Pope writes in these Words, * namely, "Whereas thou signifiedst, thou hadst travelled through the Nation of the *Boiarians*, and found them living without the Ecclesiastical Order, not having any Bishops in the Province, save one *Vivilo*, whom we ordained sometime before; the Presbyters therefore whom thou foundest there, if it be uncertain by whom they were ordained, whether by Bishops or not, let them receive Orders from their Bishop, and so let them discharge their Office." Thus it is plain, that before *Vivilo* was imposed on the *Boiarians* by Pope *Zachary*, that large Province of *Bavaria* was under a Presbyterial Government; and yet it was very large, and at this Day the Third Part thereof has its *Arch-Bishop*, whom *Strabo* (a) reckons to be inferior to none in *Germany*, either in Jurisdiction or Revenue. The Pope did indeed require a Reordination of these Presbyters, but this is no surprise in the 7th or 8th Century, when *Rome* had usurped the *Universal Headship*, and even the Power of deposing and setting up Princes, which *Zachary* gave an Example of in the Case of *Chil-derick*,

* Quia indicasti perexisse te ad Gentem Boiariorum, et invenisse eos extra ordinem Ecclesiasticum viventes, dum Episcopos non habebant in Provincia nisi unum, nomine Vivilo, quem nos ante tempus Ordinavimus; Presbyteri vero quos ibidem reperisti, si incogniti fuerint Viri illi a quibus sunt ordinati, & dubium est eos Episcopos fuisse, annon, qui eos ordinaverunt, ab Episcopo suo Benedictiones Presbyteratus suscipiant, & consecrentur, & sic Ministerio suo fungantur. Bonif. Mogunt. Epist. 130, Auct. Biblio. Patr. Tom. 2. Pag. 105. (a) Cosmog. Lib. 2. Pag. 368.

derick and Pipin. As this is a plain Discovery that Episcopacy was not the Original Government of the Church; so it did not even Universally obtain in the 7th Century. I shall only further add on this Head, that the second Council of *Carthage*, in the Year 428, having observed, that, until that Time, some Dioceses had been without any Bishops at all, did determine that these should have none for the future. The Words of the Canon are*, *It seemeth good to us, that these Dioceses which never had received Bishops, should continue without them; and these Dioceses which for a little Time have had Bishops, let them have their proper Bishops.* The Acts of this Council are ratified by the Sixth General Council of *Trullo*. Now, either the Dioceses here meant contain'd in them several distinct Congregations, or not. If they did; how is it possible to reconcile this Canon with that Council's believing the Divine Right of Episcopacy? For at this rate they determine that a whole Diocese consisting of many Congregations may still remain under a Presbyterial Government, which shews they had no great Concern for a Divine Institution, if they believed Episcopacy to be such. If it was but one single Congregation, it is no less an Enemy to the Episcopalians; for at this rate, one single Congregation had its Bishop, which Presbyterians will readily allow, without any Harm to their Cause; and so whatever side of the Question shall be embraced, it is easy to see who are the Losers.

These Instances, and moe might be added, serve to let us see how we are to understand *Jerom's* Decree, and plainly discover that Episcopal Go-

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* Placet, ut Dioceses quæ nunquam Episcopos acceperunt, non habeant; & illa Diocesis quæ aliquando habuit, habeat proprium Episcopum. *Corragz. Sum. Concil. Carth. 2 Can. 5.*

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vernment in the Church, was not universally and at once established throughout the World; for however the Change he speaks of by mutual Agreement, prov'd an Occasion of its being brought in more early in many Places; yet it appears evident, that in several other Parts where Christianity was received, it was more late, and had not a Being till after his own Time. Besides, it must be observed from the Instances already mentioned, that the true *Epocha* of the Commencement of Episcopal Government, in some Corners of the World, is clearly discover'd.

3. For clearing what has been formerly said, it must be further noted, that tho, in some of the more large and populous Cities of the *Roman Empire*, there were several Congregations of Christians, in the first Ages of the Church; yet, in smaller Villages and Country Places, the Churches or Charges of Bishops were only single Congregations. As to these Churches where there were more Congregations than one, the Person to whom the Name of Bishop was appropriate, had his own Charge in which he dispensed all the Ordinances to the People; and, at the same Time, had a particular Concern in regulating the Order of the other Charges in the City. And it is probable, that where the Number of Communicants could assemble in one Place, they had the Sacrament of the Supper from him, and he was the Person by whom the Action was performed, or some other of the Presbytery by his Order. And it is not to be doubted, that tho' the Number of Professors of Christianity in any large City, and the *Catechumeni*, might be so great, as that they could not assemble in one Place for the ordinary Participation of Ordinances; yet these who were admitted to
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partake of the Eucharist, might have Place to assemble in one Body, or those who could not have Access at first, might have afterwards Occasion, by the Removal of others, to communicate in the same Church or Place, as is the Case of many Cities even at this Day. Besides, it appears to have been the Practice of the Church of *Rome* in the 3d or Beginning of the 4th Century, that when the Bishop had consecrate the Elements in his own Church, he sent Part of them to other Congregations in the City. This Practice, according to * *Damasus*, had its Arise from *Miltiades* Bishop of *Rome*, who flourished about the Year 312. It is true, *Justin Martyr* † says, That after the President of the Assembly bath consecrate the Bread and Wine, the Deacons stand ready to distribute it to every one present, and carry it to those who are absent; yet it doth not appear, that it was to any Assembly of Christians, but rather to single Persons of the same Congregation, who had not Access to be present; for || he seems plainly to speak of the President of one single Congregation, and what was the general Practice in his Time. However, it is evident, even from what is reported by *Damasus*, that the Charge of the Bishop was confined to the City of *Rome*, seeing all of them could communicate on the same Day, with the Elements sent from the President's Church; for it is not conceivable how this Practice could obtain, if his Diocese had extended to Country Towns and Villages.

But it is certain, That the most of Churches thro' the Christian World were only Congregational, during the 2d and 3d Centuries; for, tho' these plan-

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* Hic fecit ut oblationes consecratæ per Ecclesias ex Consecratione Episcopi dirigerentur; quod declaratur fermentum, *Stillings. Irén. P. 369.*

† *Apol. 2. P. 97.* || See *Apol. 2 P. 99.*

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ted and gathered by the Apostles themselves, in some large and populous Cities to which they went, were, by the peculiar Success of their Labours, made up of more Congregations than one; yet it is certain, that these in smaller Towns and Villages, were only Congregational. Thus, the primitive Eastern Churches were generally very small and little; and so *Thorndike* † observes out of *Strabo*. And † *Sozomen* is no less express, That Bishops were ordained in the small Villages of the *Arabians* and *Cyprians*, and that the same was the State of the *Novatians* and *Montanists* who lived in *Phrygia*. The same appears to have been the Case of the Churches of *Africk* in the Days of *Cyprian*; for, in the Council of *Carthage*, where he presided, there was a considerable Number of Bishops assembled, which, at the same Time, cannot be accounted all these in *Africk*. The *Romish* Colonies there had but a very few of them embraced the Christian Faith, and yet the *Hamlets* and *Villages* had their Bishops. And long after this, in the Time of the *Vandalick* Persecution, * *Victor Uticensis* tells us, there were in the *Zeugitan* or Proconsular Province alone, 164 Bishops, which are yet within the Number, if other Historians may be credited. This was but a small Part of the *Roman* Conquest in *Africk*, and, at this Time, there were but a small Number, besides what were under their Jurisdiction, that had received the Christian Faith; for the *Moors*, who not only possessed some of the Cities, but the largest Part of the Country, are expressly, by the last mention'd Author, designed

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† Fertur in Orientis partibus per singulas Urbes & Præfecturas, singulos esse Episcoporum Gubernatores, *Thornd.* Right of Churches, Page 62.
 † Lib. 7. Cap. 19. * Unde factum est post obitum Carthaginis Episcopi Zeugitanæ & Proconsularis Provinciæ Episcopos interdiceret ordinarios quorum erat Numerus 164. *Vict. Ut. L. 1.*

Gentiles. Now, considering that even many of the *Romans* were, at this Time, but *Heathens*, and that of these who professed Christianity in the *Proconsular* Province, there were not wanting *Arians* and other Hereticks and Schismaticks, it will be found, there could be scarce 164 Parishes in that Bounds. And this is so much the clearer, in that the forenamed *Thorndike* † readily grants, That *Bishops in Africa were so plentiful, that every good Village must needs be the Seat of an Episcopal Church.* And the Learned Bishop *Burnet* says ‡, in his Observations on the *First* and *Second Canons* called *Apostolical*, “That which next occurs to be considered, “ is, in what Places *Bishopricks* were founded, and “ *Bishops* settled. We find, in all Cities where “ the Gospel was planted, and Churches constituted, that Bishops were also ordained. Among “ the *Jews*, wherever there were 120 of them “ together, there did they erect a Synagogue ----. “ Compare with this, *Acts* 1. 15. where the Number of these that constituted the first Christian “ Church, is the same. So it is like, wherever “ there was a competent Number of Christians “ together, that a Church was there settled. Yet, “ in some Villages there were Churches and Bishops; so there was a Bishop in *Bethany*: And “ *St. Paul* tells us of the Church of *Cenchrea*, which “ was the Port of *Corinth*. It is true, some think “ the Church of *Corinth* met there.” This he effectually refutes, as being without all solid Foundation, and then goes on, “ Wherefore it is probable, that the Church of *Cenchrea* was distinct “ from *Corinth*: And since they had *Phæbe* for “ their Diaconess, it is not to be doubted, but “ they had both Bishops and Deacons. From the “ several

† Right of Churches, Page 153. ‡ Page 47, 48.

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“several Cities, the Gospel was dilated and pro-
 “pagated to the Places round about. But in some
 “Countries, we find the Bishopricks very thick
 “set. They were pretty throng in *Africk*; for,
 “at a Conference which *Austine* and the Bishops of
 “that Province had with the *Donatists*, there were
 “of Bishops 286 present, and 120 absent, and 60
 “Sees were then vacant, which, in all, makes 466.
 “There were also 279 of the *Donatist* Bishops.”
 The same learned Author tells us in his *History of*
the Right of Princes (a), That *Gregory Thaumatur-*
gus being much set on the Study of Philosophy, was
 afraid to enter on the Pastoral Charge, and there-
 fore avoided all Occasions in which he might have
 been laid hold on and ordain’d: Which *Phœdimus*
 a neighbouring Bishop observing, though *Gregory*
 was then distant three Days from him, he did, by
 Prayer, dedicate him to the Service of God at *Neo-*
cæsarea, where there were but then 17 Christians;
 to which the other submitted, and served there.
 And elsewhere he says (b), In *St. Austine’s* Time it
 appears from the Journals of a Conference he had
 with the *Donatists*, That there were about 500 Bi-
 shopricks in a small Tract of Ground. The Smal-
 ness of their Dioceses is further manifest from the
 20th Canon of the Council of *Africk*, where it was
 enacted, That there should be six Neighbouring
 Bishops present at the Trial of any Presbyter who
 was accused, and three at that of a Deacon. And
Cyprian (c) lets us know, That there were 90 Bi-
 shops in the Synod of *Lambessa* that were assembled
 to condemn an old private Heretick. This was
 many Years before the Writing of his Third Epi-
 stle, in which this Story is narrated. And in the
 Synod

(a) Page 9. (b) Burnet’s Conferences, Page 348. (c) Lib. 1. Ep. 3.

Synod of *Carthage* (a), held about the Year 308, against *Novatus*, there were present 84 Bishops: And in the Sixth Council of *Carthage*, there were no less than 217. Now, if there were so many Bishops in these Provincial Synods, what must their Number have been throughout all *Africk*? Let me add, That Bishop *Bilson* (b), on the Government of the Church, makes it appear from *Ambrose*, 1 *Tim.* Chap. 3. The Third Council of *Carthage*, Canon 45. and the Council of *Africk*, Canon 56. That in some of these Churches there were only two Presbyters or one, and sometimes none at all. And it is worth Notice, that the Church of *Carthage*, which was the Charge of *Cyprian*, was 24 Years without a Bishop, in the Time of *Hunerick* King of the *Vandals*; and when they had the Offer of one made unto them, on Condition of their giving free Liberty to the *Arians*, they rejected it on these Terms, and told (c), That *Ecclesia Episcopum non delectatur habere*. This much serves to clear, that there were many in *Carthage*, and in *Africk*, who were not Members of the Orthodox Churches, as was before noted; and, at the same Time, discovers, that a *Diocesan* was not looked upon as essential to the Being of a Church, as some in our Day would obtrude upon the World.

Again, if we shall take a View of the first Establishment of Christianity in the Kingdom of *Ireland* by *St. Patrick*, it must evidently appear, that the 365 Bishops ordained by him, were only *Parochial* and not *Diocesan* Prelates. This Account of the Establishment of Christianity there, is from *Nennius*, whose Testimony is narrated by the Learned Bishop *Usher*, when treating of the Religion

(a) Auth. Synodi. Cap. 22. (b) Chap. 13. Pag. 301, 302. (c) Victor de Persec. Vand. L. 2.

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gion of the Irish, Page 59. And Mr. *Clarkson* (a) is very full in his Account of the Numerousness of the Bishops in that Kingdom; and from *Bernard* and *Baron*, he makes it clear, that there were well nigh as many Bishops as Churches. It is reasonable to think, that 365 Bishops ordained by St. *Patrick*, on the first Plantation of Christianity there, were only *Parochial*; seeing it is not supposeable, that the whole of that Kingdom was, at once, reduced to Christianity. This much is owned by the Learned *Stillingsfleet*, in his *Irenic*. Page 377 In a Word, it is not very likely, that the Bishops in *Britain* had either very large or opulent *Dioceses* about the Year 359, when the Three which were sent to the Council of *Ariminum* were so very poor, that they are particularly taken Notice of by *Sulpitius Severus**, as being oblig'd to be supported by the Publick Bounty.

Now, it being manifest, that many of the ancient Bishops had no more for their *Diocese*, but a single Congregation or Parish, the Change which was introduced for removing of Schisms, according to *Jerom* and *Hilary*, had this Effect, namely, that as in each Parish there was a Plurality of Pastors, who had the joynt Charge of the Flock, and exercised the Pastoral Office by Turns; so he that was made Choice of to be their *Moderator*, and had the Name of *Bishop* appropriate to him, was authorized to perform all the Parts of Publick Worship, Preaching, Baptising, and dispensing the Holy Sacrament of the Supper, or, at least, to name such an one of his Colleagues as was to perform any Part thereof. There appears to have been in each Parish more than one Pastor; and there is almost no Church spoken of in the *New Testament*, even

(a) Prim. Epif. P. 40. * Hist. Sacr. L. 2. C. 41. P. 267. Edit. Vorst.

even such as hath the greatest Appearance of having been Congregational, but what had still more than one Bishop in it. Now, it would seem from *Jerom*, that the People came to be divided into Factions, and some would hear none but one Minister, some none but a second, and others a third; and so they put off their attending on Publick Ordinances, till it fell to be the Turn of him whom they had in greatest Esteem, and valued themselves on being his Followers, and bearing his Name, more than that of Christians. This being the State of Things, it could not miss to create Divisions among the Colleagues themselves, raise their Ambitions to aspire after a numerous Following, and study who should have most baptised by them, and so add to their Party and Faction. Matters being brought to this *Crisis*, it required some speedy Remedy; and that which was fallen upon, was the Change of their former State of Management, and, instead of their oldest Minister's being continued as Moderator, they altered their Course, and made Choice of one of the most able of their Number, or him, whom they look'd upon to be of the greatest Influence or Parts in the Presbytery, to have the Ordering of all the Parts of publick Worship in their Name, which the former Moderators appear not to have had, but only moderate in their Meetings. Thus he being authorized by the Presbytery to do all in their Name, and as their Delegate, it was reckon'd would have a Tendency to pluck up and silence all their Divisions, and bring their unnatural Factions to an End. For according to this, these among them, who, it would appear, were old and thought unworthy to hold the Place of *Preses*, as *Hilary* expresseth it, and it may be, many of them weak
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and imprudent, were now laid aside from coming into the first Seat by their Turn, and One was chosen out of their own Number, whom they judged Wise, Prudent and acceptable to the People, who when he was to act in their Name, it was thought there was no further Occasion for Factions or Schisms. This I take to be *Jerom's* true Meaning. And it cannot miss to be observed, that according to this Change that was made, when the Name of Bishop came to be appropriate to one of the Presbytery who was made Choice of by themselves, all the Power he received was from his Colleagues; and it is impossible to assign any other Original for it. For these could not possibly have any Thing like Episcopal Ordination, there being no such Thing in the World at that Time, or such an Office as that of Bishops superior to Presbyters. All that the first Bishops had, was by the Election of their Colleagues, and so their whole Powers were derived from them, and from no other Fountain; and consequently cannot be conceived as a superiour Order or Office to them Originally, without involving a Contradiction.

It must be further noted that this Change by which one was chosen to act in the Name of the Presbytery, made a remarkable Alteration in these Cities where the Apostles had planted Churches, and which consisted of more Congregations than One. For in such populous Cities and Churches, the Person to whom the Name of Bishop was appropriate, not only had the Moderation of Affairs in the Presbytery, which the former *Presides* had, but also the Power of regulating and ordering Matters of Worship, for preventing of Schisms, which were imagined to have arisen from the Parity that formerly obtain'd, by every One's increas-

increasing his own Followers, and striving to have Numbers added to his own Party. The Sacrament of the Holy Supper, whether it was still performed before this Time in their separate Assemblies, or together in one Place, so as that the People might come by Turns to communicate in the same Church, does not alter the Case; for still all the Colleagues had alike Right to perform the Action, which no doubt they did in their proper *Vice*: But now by this Change, he that was chosen had the Right of ordering the Manner of the Action, and in his Church it was gone about, either by himself, or one appointed by him. And afterwards, according to *Damascus*, the Elements were consecrate in the Bishop's Church, and then a Part of them sent to the rest of the Assemblies in the City; and thus it came to pass, - we have so frequent Account in *Cyprian* and others, of *one Priest* and *one Altar*. And here it may be further observed, that whatever was pretended, the grand Source of this Change, was the subtle Plottings of designing Men among them, whose Ambition influenc'd them to have the Mastery over their Colleagues, and the principal Share in Management. These no doubt exercised their Craft and Subtilty to have the Change introduced, and then they had a fair Occasion to make use of their Art and Projects to get themselves into the Chair, and vested with a Power to act in the Name of their Presbytery, which afforded them the best Handle to gratify their Ambition, and improve their Cunning to grow in Greatness and Power: For the Spirit of Antichrist was * still working, and there were not wanting Instruments in all Ages of the primitive Church to promote his Interest, till he came to his

* 2 Thess. 2. 7, 8, 9.

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his Height; as there were not wanting subtle Agents to support him at this Day. This was the pretended Remedy for preventing of Schisms, but in the Event it prov'd worse than the Disease. And whatever Advantages were propos'd by it; yet it is manifest, it opened a Door for subverting the Apostolical Constitution of the Church of Christ, more than what their former Moderators could have done, who were not impowered to act in the Presbytery's Name, nor had a Title to manage in regulating the Parts of divine Worship. For tho' they continued for some Time to act in the Presbytery's Name, and not go much beyond their former *Præsides*, and pretended so to do, even after they had little Regard to it; yet they grew *Paulatim*, or by Degrees, till their Power came to be more perceptible in the Church. In the Beginning the Bishop had nothing but the Election of his Co-presbyters to install him in that Character; but in Process of Time, nay in the third Century, was brought to pass, that the neighbouring Bishops came together, and not being satisfied with the bare Election of the Presbyters, they introduced a new and Episcopal Ordination. This novel Practice came to have a bearing in many Places in the Days of *Cyprian*; and so he † says it obtained, *sepe per Provincias universas*, almost in every Province. This was the Effect of the Change introduced into the Christian Church, under Pretence of plucking up the Seeds of Divisions and Schisms, which in the Event produced the bitter Fruits of Tyranny, lordly Dominion, Division itself, and a Scene of human and diabolical Inventions and Superstitions. Had this been the Remedy adapted for answering the End, which I shall not question was sincerely

† Epist. 67.

sincerely proposed by some, it is not to be imagined but the inspired Apostle would have prescribed it for rooting out the Schisms and Divisions in the Church of *Corinth*; whereas he has not the least Insinuation thereof when writing to that sacred Body: For he lays not the Blame of these Things on their Constitution or Church Polity; but on their Carnality, Pride, and other Vices that abounded among them. The true Remedy was, to mortify their Corruptions, have no Man's Person in Admiration, but look on God as the Source of all Mercies, and him alone who could bless the Labours of his Servants, and make them successful for answering the great End of their Appointment, *1 Cor. 3.* The neglect of these divine Institutions, for maintaining Peace, Order, and Harmony in the Church of Christ, and betaking themselves to their own Contrivances, was attended with the most fatal Consequences.

Now, whether we consider this Change in its first Beginnings, or when it came to a more remarkable bearing in the third Century; yet 'tis Earliness in either of these Respects, can never be an Argument of its Lawfulness, or that it has the Stamp of divine Authority. There were other Things that crept into the Church as soon as this Change in its Government; and particularly, the Controversy about the Observation of *Easter* was a Bone of Contention || in the Days of *Irenæus*, and Apostolical Tradition was strongly pleaded on both Sides, by the Church of *Rome* on the one Hand, and the *Eastern* Churches on the other; and yet they were not capable on either Side, to make a real Discovery how, or in what Time, it was introduced; or come to discover, whether

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|| Euseb. L. 5, C. 22.

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the 14 Day was to be kept, or these alledged on the other Side. Here we may add the Words of *Irenæus* * in his Epistle to *Victor* Bishop of *Rome*, dehorting him from excommunicating the *Eastern Churches*, because of their differing from him on this Head, *This Diversity in Fasting, saith he, did not begin in our Time, but long before among our Ancestors; who, as it would appear, transmitted to their Posterity a Custom, which thro' Simplicity and Ignorance had crept into the Church.* Many other Things were introduced into the Church soon after the Days of the Apostles, which are more hard and difficult to account for, and determine the Occasion and Grounds of their being received therein, than that of the Change of its Government, and at the same Time are no less opposite to the Apostolick Doctrine than the other. This much the Church was warned of by the inspired Apostle (a); and *Irenæus* has given us a clear Instance of the uncertainty of Things in his Time, who was not above 90 Years removed from the last surviving Apostle. Remarkable to this Purpose are the Words of *Hegeſippus* in *Eusebius* L. 3. C. 29. namely, no sooner had the Apostles ended their Lives, and those who were honoured to hear their inspired Wisdom were gone, than a Conspiracy of Errors burst forth, and without Mask opposed themselves to the Truth.

4. The ancient Canons that were made in several Councils, give us the clearest Discovery of the gradual Increase of the Episcopal Power, and at the same Time let us see, that Originally there was

* Et ista jejunantium varietas, non nostro demum tempore, sed multo antè per illos cœpit, qui ante nos præter accuratam Diligentiam, ut verisimile est, rerum habentis potiri, simplicem & vulgatam Consuetudinem posthabuerunt ac mutarunt. *Euseb.* L. 5. C. 23. (a) *Act* 20, 29. & 1 *Tim.* 4, & 2 *Tim.* 3.

was no Difference between Bishop and Presbyter (b). In the fourth Council of Carthage, Can. 20. it was decreed, *That a Bishop should not be exercised in the Affairs of his Household, but wholly give himself to reading, praying, and preaching the Word.* This Council was held about the Year 436. And what is mentioned from it, is an evident Discovery that the Dignity of the Episcopal Office was then reckon'd to consist in Teaching and Preaching, and not in secular Power. The same Council says in their 3d Canon, *When a Presbyter is ordained, the Bishop blessing him, and holding his Hand on his Head, all the Presbyters present are also to hold their Hands on his Head together with the Bishop.* Again, in the 23d Canon, it is expressly determined, *That a Bishop ought not to hear any Cause but in the Presence of his Clergy, otherwise his Sentence is void and null, unless it be ratified by the Presence of the Clergy.* And to give a further View of the remaining Equality that at this Time was preserv'd between Bishops and Presbyters, it is enacted in the 34th Canon, *That if a Bishop shall be sitting in any Place, the Presbyter is not to be allowed to stand.* And in the 35th, *Let the Bishop in the Church in the Assembly of the Presbyters have the highest Seat; yet in his House, he must know that the Presbyters are his Colleagues.* Thus then, Presbyters and Bishops being Colleagues, this must at once discover their original Equality. Besides, it appears from the same Council, that tho' it was not allowed to a Bishop to sit and a Presbyter to stand; yet, in the 39th Canon it is decreed thus, *Let a Deacon sit in any Place, at the Desire of the Presbyter;* whence it is manifest, that the Difference between a Bishop and a Presbyter was not so great, as between a

(b) See Garanz. Summa Conc.

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Presbyter and Deacon. Now, the Office of a Presbyter and Deacon are really distinct, and the latter inferiour to the former; and so, if the Character and Office of a Presbyter had been really believed, by this Council, to be inferior to that of a Bishop, the Rules of Proportion required that there should have been the same Distance observed between them, as between Presbyters and Deacons, whereas the contrary is manifest from what hath been said. In a Word, if it shall be observ'd, that the Bishop's Dignity and Office was to be exercised in preaching the Word, and not in civil Affairs, and this is also competent to a Presbyter; that the Presbyters joyned with him in the Act of Ordination, and the Determination of all other Affairs of an Ecclesiastical Nature; that they were on such a Footing as both behov'd to sit together; and that tho' the Bishop had the first Seat in their Presbyteries, yet they still were Colleagues; and the Deacons were Servants of the one as well as the other, which is expressly provided in the 37th Canon of the same Council: I say, if all these Things be observed, it will leave little Ground of Hesitation with the unprejudic'd, that the Council of *Carthage* had not the smallest Thoughts of Bishops being of a superior Order to Presbyters by Divine Institution. Thus upwards of 200 Years after the Change was introduced, the Power of Ordination and Government was not taken from Presbyters, they still joyned with the Bishop in both, and without them he was not capable to act, and at the same Time they still remained Colleagues; which imports the *Sameness* of Office and Charge in the strongest Terms.

Again,

Again, Let it be further considered, that the Council of *Aix la Chapelle* * about the Year 816. own the original Indentity of Bishops and Presbyters, and expressly declare, That the *Ordination of the Clergy was reserved to the High Priest, only for the Maintenance of his Dignity.* Now if we shall look back to the Year 619. we shall find the second Council of *Sevil* in *Spain*, declaring themselves in these Words, || *Albeit there are very many Dispensations of the Mysteries common to the Presbyters and Bishops; yet let them [the Presbyters] know, that there are some Things forbidden them by the old Law, and others by Modern and Ecclesiastical Rules; such as the Ordination of Presbyters, &c.* This is the reading of the Canon according to *Caranza*; but it is otherwise render'd by † others, namely, *Altho' there are many Functions of the Ministry common to the Presbyters with the Bishops; yet by the Modern and Ecclesiastical Rules, there are some Functions deny'd to them, such as the Consecration of Presbyters, Deacons, and Virgins.* Let us ascend yet a little higher to the Year 600. and we shall have the Bishop of *Sevil* (a) agreeing with the Council held in that Place, while he asserts, that, *To these [Presbyters] as well as to the Bishops is committed the Dispensation of the Mysteries of God;*

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* Sed solum propter Auctoritatem, summo Sacerdoti Clericorum Ordinatio reservata est, Concil. Aquisq; Can 8. || Quamvis cum Episcopis plurima illis Mysteriorum communis sit Dispensatio, quædam tamen auctoritate veteris Legis, quædam novellis & Ecclesiasticis regulis sibi prohibita noverint; sicut Presbyterorum & Diaconorum & Virginum consecratio. Caranz. Sum. Conc. Hispal. Can 7. P. 159. † Quamvis cum Episcopis plurima illis Ministeriorum communis sit Dispensatio, quædam Novellis & Ecclesiasticis regulis, sibi prohibita noverint, sicut Presbyterorum, &c. Conc. Hispal. secundum Decret. 7. apud Binton. 4. P. 560. See Stillingf. Iren. P. 214. (a) His, sicut Episcopis, dispensatio Mysteriorum Dei commissa est; præfunt enim Ecclesiis Christi, & in consecratione corporis & sanguinis consortes cum Episcopo sunt similiter, & in doctrina, & in officio Prædicandi Populo; sed sola propter Auctoritatem summo Sacerdoti Clericorum Ordinatio reservata est, nè &c. De Eccles. Officiis. L. 7. Cap. 7.

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they are set over the Churches of Christ, and in the mingling the Body and Blood of Christ, they are alike with the Bishops, and in the Office of preaching to the People; only for the greater Honour of the Bishop, and preventing Schisms, the Power of Ordination was restricted to him. Thus from these two Canons, and the concurring Testimony of the Bishop of Sevil, it is easy to perceive, that the Superiority of Bishops to Presbyters was not of Divine Institution, but brought about by Ecclesiastical Laws. And even according to the reading of Caranza, it is evident, the raised Power of Bishops was not from the Authority of the Divine Law, but *that of the Church*; for he afterwards adds, *Solis deberi Episcopis autoritate Canonum præcipitur*, which is something quite different from a Divine Institution. And they who have not a Mind to distinguish between the Authority of the Scriptures, and that of *Ecclesiastical Canons*, will not readily frame a just Notion of a *Jus Divinum* in their Establishment.

Again, the original Equality and Honour of Bishops and Presbyters will appear from these *Canons*, wherein the same Rules and Regulations are laid down with Respect unto both. Thus the Council of *Agatha* * determines, that a Presbyter no less than a Bishop was not to be ordain'd, till he arrived at the Age of 30 Years; and in Consequence of this, the Council of *Arles* held in the Year 524. † determines by the first Canon, that the Honour of the Episcopate or Presbyterate should be conferr'd on no Laick till he arrived at the

* Presbyterum vel Episcopum ante 30 annos, i. e. antequam ad viri perfectam ætatem veniant, Metropolitanorum nullum ordinare. *Sec. Conc Agath Ca. 17.* apud Blond. Apol. P. 141. † Episcopus vel Presbyterii honorem, nullum Laicum ante præmissam Conversionem, vel ante 30 annos ætatis accipere. *Arlet Conc Ca. 1.* apud Blond ubi supra.

the same Number of Years. And in the 3d Canon of the first Council of *Bracarum* *, it is statuted, That the People are not to be saluted by the Bishop after any other Manner than by the Presbyter, but both in the same Way. This exactly agrees with the Canons of the 4 Council of *Carthage*, where it is ordained, That if a Bishop was sitting, it was not allowed that a Presbyter should stand; and, That in the Bench of Presbyters in the Church, the Bishop had the first Seat, but in the Manse or House, he was their Colleague. These I have mention'd on a former Head, and shall only further observe, that *Egbertus Eboracensis* x, who flourished in the 8 Century, reads this last Canon, That the Bishop should sit highest in the Church by the Consent of the Presbyters. This Ancient Writer expressly narrates, That, during his Time, this was the State of the Church of *England*, as is observed by the judicious *Blondel*. Now if it be manifest, that the Bishop was advanced to the first Seat in the Church by the Consent of the Presbyters; that he was indeed their Colleague without Doors; that while he sat in the Church, a Presbyter was not to stand; and that both were to salute the People after the same Manner; it must be a surprizing Prejudice that can make Men plead, that these two are different Orders of Officers by Divine Institution. Nay, if these Things be compared with what was formerly laid down, is it not evident to a Demonstration, that the Superiority of Bishops to Presbyters had

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* Non aliter Episcopi & aliter Presbyteri populum, sed uno modo, saluent. Concil. Bracaren. 1. Can. 3. A. D. 563. apud eundem P. 142. x. Ut Episcopus in Ecclesia consensu Presbyterorum sublimior sedeat. Apud Blond. ubi Sup. compare with this the Powers given to Presbyters by *Gratian*. Sed quia scriptum est, Presbyteri duplici honore honorentur, maxime qui laudent in verbo Domini, predicare eos decet, utile est benedicere, congruum confirmare, convenit reddere Communionem, necesse est visitare infirmos, orare pro invalidis, atque omnia Dei Sacramenta complere, &c. Dist. 95. Cap. Eccl.

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its Rise from the Custom and Practice of the Church, and from no other Original ?

As in the fourth Council of *Carthage* already mentioned, it was decreed that no Deed done by a Bishop was valid, without the Concurrence of the Presbyters; so the Excerptions * of *Egbert* expressly declare, *That the Rector ought to do nothing without the Counsel of his Brethren; for it is written, Do thou all this with Counsel, and after the Deed thou shalt not repent.* And the second Council of *Spain* in the 6th Canon declares, † *That it is not lawful for any Bishop to Depose a Presbyter or Deacon without the Trial of a Council; for the Bishop can alone confer Honour on Priests and Ministers; but he alone cannot take it from them.* And the Council of *Hip-pone* (a) held *A. D.* 393. expressly determines in the 24. Canon, That Presbyters are not to make Sale of Things belonging to the Church, without the Knowledge of the Bishop; but at the same Time it is no less provided on the other Hand, that it was not lawful for the Bishop to make Sale of any Lands belonging to the Church, without the Presbyters Knowledge. And the 4th Council of *Carthage* || declares, *That any Bishop's making a Gift, or Exchange of what belongs to the Church, without the Compliance and Subscription of the Clergy, is void and Null.* Thus, seeing the Bishop could do nothing without the Counsel of his Brethren, nor Depose

* Nihil rector sine fratrum suorum Consilio faciat: scriptum est enim, omnia fac cum Consilio, & post factum non poenitebis. apud Blond. Apol. P. 135. † Ideo de revimus (juxta priscorum Patrum decretum) Synodali sententiâ, ut nullus nostrum sine Concilii examine, deicere quemlibet Presbyterum vel Diaconum audeat. Episcopus enim Sacerdotibus & Ministris solus honorem dare potest: autem solus non potest. Caranz. Sum. Conc. Hisp. Can. 6. (a) Placuit ut Presbyteri non vendant rem Ecclesie, ut constituti sunt, nescientibus Episcopis suis, quomodo & Episcopis non liceat vendere prædia Ecclesie, ignorante Concilio vel Presbyteris suis, apud Blond. P. 138. || Irrita erit donatio Episcoporum, vel venditio vel commutatio rei Ecclesiasticæ, absque Conniventia & subscriptione Clericorum. Caranz. Sum. Concil. Carthag. 4. Can. 31.

Depose a Presbyter or Deacon without the Trial of a Council, nor make Sale of Things belonging to the Church, without the Concurrence and Subscription of the Clergy; it must make it evident to the impartial Considerer, that originally Presbyters and Bishops were the same; for even after a Change was made by the Laws of the Church, the one no less than the other was concerned in the external Affairs thereof, and the Presbyter was not under the Cognizance of the Bishop, so as to be deposed by him on any Crime.

Again, the original Equality of Presbyters and Bishops had its remaining Footsteps a good Time in the Church, which clearly appears from their sitting, and acting in Conjunction with Bishops both in *Provincial* and *National* Councils. Thus in the Synod of *Rome* under *Cornelius*, about *A. D.* 255. * There were present 60 Bishops and many more Presbyters and Deacons. These were assembled against *Novatus* a Presbyter in the Church of *Rome*, and acted conjunctly with the Bishops in giving Judgment in his Case. And the Synod of *Antioch*, † which was held *A. D.* 264. against *Paulus Samosatenus* who succeeded to *Demetrius* Bishop of that Place, was made up both of Presbyters, Bishops and Deacons, and all these joyntly were ready to have deposed him from his Episcopate; but by his Disimulation he escaped at that Time, till the next Council in that Place *An.* 270. where he was deposed by an Assembly of Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons. Thus Presbyters were allowed to joyn in the Exercise of Discipline, even against a Bishop, which is no Evidence of their being an inferior Order to these, especially considering they had a Power of dispensing Word and

* Euseb. Lib. 6. Cap. 42. † Euseb. Lib. 7. Cap. 29. & Cap. 26, 27.

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and Sacraments. Besides, in the Council of *Elvire* (a) convened about the Time of the first Council of *Nice*, there is mention of 36. Presbyters who joyned with the Bishops in that Assembly, and subscribed the Deeds enacted therein. The same was the Case in the Synod at *Arles*; (b) which met much about the same Time, and had in it Twelve Presbyters subscribing to its Acts. The like is to be observed in the Councils held at *Rome* under *Hilary* (c) and *Gregory*, where there were Twenty two Bishops and Thirty four Presbyters: And in the first Synod under *Symmachus* *; there were Seventy two Bishops and Sixty seven Presbyters all subscribing in their Order. The same was the State of the 3d, 5th and 6th Synods under *Symmachus* Bishop of *Rome*. And to these we may add, that the Council of *Rome* under *Felix* had in it Forty three Bishops and Seventy four Presbyters. All these Instances are adduced by Bishop *Bilson* || in his Book on the Government of the Church; and for establishing what he advances therein, he offers the Canons of several Councils. Thus it is manifest, That Presbyters had a Power to joyn in National and Provincial Councils, and therein enact Laws, and at the same Time, give their Suffrage in passing Sentence against Delinquents as well as the Bishops. Now, the highest Ecclesiastical Power is exercised in Councils, and the greatest Instance of Synodical Power is discovered in making of Canons; and so Presbyters had not only a Power of dispensing Word and Sacraments; but even the highest jurisdictional Authority in the Church. Besides, in these Synods, they not only deter-

(a) Subl. Elib. Con. Fol. 282. (b) Subl. Arelat. Conc. 2 Fol. 293.
 (c) Tom. 1. Con. Fol. 953. Greg. Lib. 4. Cap. 88. * Tom. 1. Con.
 Fol. 1002. || Cap. 86. Pag. 468, 469.

determined Points of Doctrine, and condemned Hereticks, but even concurred in deposing of Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons. And Bp. * *Field* owns that in all Provincial and National Assemblies, Presbyters voted and subscribed after the same Manner with the Bishops; whether they were convened for enacting Laws, determining Causes, or defining Controversies about Doctrines: And this he confirms from several Acts or Canons of Councils. And the same Author expressly enough declares, That in Provincial Synods, the Presbyters joyned in Causes relating to the Ordination of Bishops, and their Depositions, and in Strifes and Causes that were brought before them by Appeals from particular Churches. All these Things clearly demonstrate, That it was a long Time before Presbyters were deprived of their original Power of Jurisdiction; and that for several Ages after the Change spoken of by *Jerom*, they exercised that Power on Bishops. Besides, in the Council of *Nice* in *Bitbunia*, A. D. 325, against the *Arian Heresie*, there was a vast Number of Bishops and Presbyters †, all joynly giving their Suffrage in the most fundamental Article of our Holy Religion, and subscribing their Acts. In this Council there was Judgment given against *Eusebius* Bishop of *Nicomedia*, *Theogrus* Bishop of *Nice*, and others, who were afterwards restored. And what is more, they compounded the Schism of the *Novatians*, and past Sentence against *Meletius* a Bishop in *Egypt*, because of his irregularities, and ordaining of Bishops to his own Faction. But before this, about the Year 303, according to *Baronius*, the Council of *Sinuessa* assembled on the

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* Of the Church, L. 5. C. 49. P. 374. &c. 30. P. 160. † *Spanhem*. Hist. Chr. §. 4. Pag. 1895, &c.

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Relapse of *Marcellinus* Bishop of *Ancyra*, who had embraced the Heresy of *Paulus Samosatenus*, and maintained Christ to be a mere Man; and if the Writers of those Times may be credited, || there were 300 Bishops in that Assembly, besides Presbyters. And if we shall ascend yet higher to the Days of *Victor* Bishop of *Rome*, it will appear he acted in Conjunction with the Presbyters of that Church, in (a) establishing the Time of the Observation of *Easter*, and in their Name wrote Letters to other Churches. This may easily let us see, what we may judge of the several other Synods held both in the East and West in the close of the first Century. To these we may (b) joyn the Council of *Carthage* about the Year 255, where the Bishops in the Provinces of *Africk*, *Numidia* and *Mauritania*, with the Presbyters and Deacons, were present; and in that of *Eliberi* or *Elvire* about the Year 305, there were Nineteen Bishops, Twenty six Presbyters, and all the Deacons and common People standing by. And at *Rome* in the Year 315. besides others, there were Forty two Presbyters with the Bishops: And A. D. 390. There was a Presbytery (c) held in that Place, against *Jovinian* and others, where the Sentence was past by the Presbyters, Deacons, and the whole Clergy. In a Word, not only Bishops, but Presbyters, represented Churches in Synods, as their Delegates; and so at *Arles* there were Thirty three Bishops, Fifteen Presbyters and Twenty six Deacons, all assembled A. D. 314. These, and a variety of Instances of the like Nature might be adduced; but when it is so manifest from the 26. Canon of the Council of *Carthage* and others already

|| Idem Pag. 907. (a) Euseb. Lib. 5. Cap. 23, 28. (b) See Spanh Hist. Christ. 5. 2. Pag. 681, &c. (c) See Blond. Apol. Pag. 202, &c

readly mentioned, That a Bishop could do nothing in any Cause, but by the Concurrence of his Clergy, and that all his Acts, without them were void and null, what need is to enlarge on this Head? Nay it has already been made manifest from the Sixth Canon of the 2d Council of *Sevil*, that a Bishop without any other neighbouring Bishops might ordain a Presbyter, but he could not Depose him without the Concurrence of others. Yet it must be considered, that tho' he might ordain a Presbyter without the Concurrence of neighbouring Bishops; yet still it was to be done with the Concurrence of his own Clergy, and the Assent and Testimony of the Citizens, according to the Twenty second Canon of the Fourth Council of *Carthage**. The same is confirmed from the Tenth Canon of the Third Council of *Carthage*, and the Explication that is put upon it by *Gratian* (a). Now let all these Things be compared together, and I leave it to the Consideration of the unprejudiced, if there be not the clearest Footsteps of the Original Parity of Bishops and Presbyters; and tho' the Change introduced into the Church was very soon, by general Agreement and Consent; yet the Power of Presbyters was only gradually taken from them. So, the utmost our Episcopalians can plead in the Behalf of their Constitution, is the Authority of Ecclesiastical Canons, which comes infinitely short of an absolute binding Force on Men's Consciences, and can never dissolve the Obligation of a Divine Establishment. It will be more than difficult for any Episcopalian, to give a suitable

* Episcopus sine Consilio Clericorum suorum Clericos non ordinet, ita ut Civium Assensum, & Conniventiam & Testimonium querat *Caranz. Sum. Conc. Carth. 4. Can. 22. (a) Grat. Causa. 15. Quest. 7. Cap. 5.*

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able Proof, that ever any Council till that of *Trent* (a), declared the Superiority of Bishops to Presbyters by Divine Right, It is true, that the *Spaniards*, with some others that joyned with them in that Council, moved that this might be defined; but the next morning Three Patriarchs, Six Arch-Bishops, and Eleven Bishops, came to the Legate's Chamber, and requested him that the Superiority of Bishops to Presbyters *jure Divino* might not be put in the Canon; because it would favour of Ambition, it not being seemly they should give a Sentence in their own Favours, and it would be cross to the Inclinations of the greater Part. And tho' the *Spaniards* prevailed, and it came at last to be ingrossed; yet it was put in so ambiguous Words, as might not give Offence to the other Party. The Words as they stand in the Seventh Canon of that Council are to be seen on the foot of the Page *. And it is evident to every impartial Considerer, that they do not expressly determine that Bishops are of a superior Order to Presbyters; but the general Definition which they gave, was in Opposition to the Protestants, and in Favours of the Pope. And I cannot help thinking, that one of the Articles for which the famous Mr. *John* (b) *Wiclef* was condemned as a Heretick by the Council of *Constance*, was the great Motive with that of *Trent*, in passing this Canon, namely, that *Confirmatio juvenum, Clericorum Ordinatio, locorum Consecratio, reservatur Papæ et Episcopis propter cupiditatem Lucri temporalis & honoris.*

(a) Hist. Concil. Trident. Lib. 7. Pag. (mihi) 619. * Si quis dixerit, Episcopos non esse Presbyteris superiores, vel non habere Potestatem confirmandi, ordinandi, vel eam quam habent, illis esse cum Presbyteris communem, ---- Anathema sit. Concil. Trident. Sessio. 23. Can. 7.

(b) Error Wiclef. 28.

noris. It were to be wished, that this could be only said of those who are the professed Pillars of the See of Rome.

S E C T. V.

The Divine and Original Parity among Pastors proved by Testimonies of Ancient Fathers, and later Divines, both Popish and Protestant; which import their acknowledging a Change to have been made in the Government of the Church.

I Shall, in the next Place, give some few *Testimonies* from particular Persons, which will have no small Influence to clear up what hath been already said, and make it appear, That *Presbyter* and *Bishop* were originally the same, and consequently, there must, of Necessity, have been a Change made in the Church, after that Age in which the Apostles flourished, and the *Canon* of the *New Testament* was concluded. The first Testimony I shall bring on the Field is that of *Victor Bishop of Rome*, which runs in these Words,
 “ * As thy holy Fraternity were taught by those
 “ Presbyters, who had seen the Apostles in the
 “ Flesh, and govern’d the Church until thy Time,
 “ [*we find*] the Catholick Church celebrate
 “ *Pasch*,

* Sicut Sancta fraternitas tua a Presbyteris qui Apostolos in Carne viderant, erudita est, qui & Ecclesiam ad tua tempora rexerunt, non 14 Lunâ cum Judæis, sed 15 usque ad 21 Pascha, Catholica Ecclesia celebravit. --- Per tuam ergo fraternitatem, Presbyteris Galliarum Litteræ mittantur, ut observent Pascha, non cum Judæis negatoribus Christi, sed cum sequacibus Apostolorum prædicantibus veritatem Christi. Salutar te Collegium Fratrum; Saluta fratres qui tecum versantur in Domino. Eubolus, qui Epistolam fert Viennam, de collegio nostro, tecum vivere & Mori paratus est. quem suscipe in Domino Jesu Christo. Vale. *Victor. Epist. ad Dion. apud Blond. Page 35.*

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“ *Pasch*, not on the 14th of the Moon with the
 “ *Jews*, but from the 15th Day to the 21st. ---
 “ Therefore let thy Fraternity write to the Pres-
 “ byters of *Gaul*, that they observe *Pasch*, not as
 “ the *Jews* who deny Christ, but with the Follow-
 “ ers of the Apostles, and Preachers of the Truth.
 “ The College of the Brethren salute thee; Salute
 “ the Brethren who are with thee in the Lord.
 “ *Eubolus* one of our College, who carries this
 “ Epistle to *Vienna*, is ready to live and die with
 “ thee ----.” This Epistle was sent by *Victor* and
 his Colleagues to *Dionysius* Bishop of *Vienna*; and
 from this Passage it is evident to a Demonstration,
 That Presbyters were the Successors of the Apo-
 stles; the constant Rulers of the Church from them
 to the Days of *Victor*, who lived in the Close of the
 Second Century. Besides, what can be more evi-
 dent, than, that *Victor* at *Rome*, and *Dionysius* at
Vienna, had their respective Presbyters for their
 Colleagues? Than which nothing can be more
 strong for the Equality of their Power and Office.
 A College of Persons denotes Equality in Authori-
 ty, and the strictest Union. So that *Victor* living
 immediately on the Back of the Change that was
 introduced, speaks more clearly of the Original
 Equality of Bishops and Presbyters; tho’ he him-
 self was raised to be their *Preses* or *Bishop*. In a
 Word, the Church in *France* was, at this Time,
 only under the Government of Presbyters; for, to
 these it was, that *Dionysius* and his Fraternity were
 desired to write. And indeed, tho’ *Tertullian* li-
 ved some Years after *Victor*; yet he does not pre-
 tend to the Superiority of Bishops to Presbyters by
 Divine Right, but by the Order of the Church.
 His Words are, * *Certain approved Elders preside,*
who

who have obtain'd that Honour, not by Price, but by Testimony. This clearly discovers that Presbyters presided in Ecclesiastical Courts, and had a Hand in the Exercise of Discipline. And *Origen*, who lived after *Tertullian*, makes indeed a Distinction between Presbyters and Bishops, but no more pretends to a Divine Foundation for it than the other. For, in his Book against *Celsus*, he calls the Presbyters *Ecclesiae Dulemtai*, and in his *Treatise* on the 12th of *Matthew*, he makes this Remark on these Words, *It shall not be so among you: Let not those who seem to have some Precedency in the Church, act the Lords over the Brethren, nor exercise Power over them.* This is no Evidence that *Origen* was satisfied in his own Mind, that Bishops were of a superior Order to Presbyters, when he reckons them Brethren, and leaves no more but a seeming Precedency to the former, which, no doubt, began to appear in his Time, by the Change that was introduced. And whatever Power the Bishops seem to have had in the Days of *Cyprian* †, who was soon after *Origen*, and in the 3d Century; yet he himself most freely owns the Presbyters to be his Colleagues, and expressly says, He could do nothing without them. On this very Topick the Learned ‡ *Chamier* is not ashamed to alledge, that the Supremacy of the Bishop of *Rome* was without Foundation; seeing, anciently, all other Bishops were, both by themselves and him, acknowledged to be his Colleagues. His Words are, " All Men know, N n " that,

† Cui rei non potui me solum iudicem dare, cum multi adhuc de Clero abientes sunt, & hæc singulorum Consilio tractanda sit, & li-
manda plenius ratio, non tantum cum Collegis meis, sed & cum ple-
be ipsa Universa. Epist. 34. In ordinationibus Clericis (fratres charis-
simi) solemus vos ante Consulere, & mores ac merita singulorum
communi consilio penderare --- Hunc a me. & a Collegis qui pre-
sentes aderant Ordinatam scitis; Ep 33. *Ad Auxilium*. Vide Epist. 18.
ad Cler. Et 10. ad Eosd. Et 6, &c. ‡ Tom. 2 L 14 C. 14 N. 12.

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“ that, in good *Latin*, these are Colleagues, who
 “ are in the same Charge, and enjoy the same Of-
 “ fice. There indeed may be, in some Kind of
 “ Office, diverse Degrees of Dignity; one of the
 “ two Consuls were more illustrious than the o-
 “ ther, and the *Prætor Urbanus* more eminent than
 “ the rest of the *Prætors*; but none in the same
 “ Office can be subject to another. Wherefore,
 “ wherever one is subject to another, these cannot
 “ be Colleagues.” This is a clear Evidence, that
Cyprian had an Eye to the First and Original Insti-
 tution, when he denominates the Presbyters his
 Colleagues, without whose Counsel he could do
 nothing, tho’ the Custom of the Church in his
 Time had manifestly corrupted it. But however
 far the primitive Institution of the Church was vi-
 tiate in that Age; yet still the Original Equality
 of Presbyters and Bishops had its Impression on the
 Minds of Men; for *Caldonius*, who, according to
 the Custom of these Times, was raised to the Epi-
 scopate, and flourished about the Middle of the 3d
 Age, in very strong Terms intimates in his Epi-
 stle to *Cyprian* and his Presbyters, That they were
Colleagues, and requir’d to act by a joynt Power.
 His Words, in the Inscription of his Epistle to *Cy-
 prian*, are, * *Caldonius to Cyprian and his Co-Presby-
 ters, who remain together at Carthage.* He imme-
 diately adds, *If ye have any Thing to signifie by com-
 mon Counsel, write to me.* From this it is easy to
 perceive, that *Caldonius* reckon’d *Cyprian* amongst
 his Presbyters, and it clearly discovers they were
 to act with common Counsel, without the least
Innuendo of *Cyprian*’s being of a Superior Order to
 them;

* *Cypriano et Compresbyteris Carthagini consistentibus Caldonius.*
 --- *Si quid ex communi Consilio placuerit, scribite mihi. Cald. Epist.*
 ad *Cypr.* inter *Cyprianas.*

them; for he writes to them as on an equal Footing, and making up one Consistory. Nay, *Austin* †, whose Testimony I have adduced on a former Occasion, expressly agrees with what hath been just now said, and calls the *Presbyters* that are with him his *Colleagues*. Did he, in this, believe himself to be of a higher Order than these, by Divine Institution? No. Tho' he lived in the 5th Century, he was abundantly satisfied, that his Episcopate was a Word of Honour, which Use had made fashionable in the Church: He was not such a Stranger to the *Latin* Tongue, as to call *Presbyters* his *Colleagues*, unless he had believed their Original Equality and Sameness in Office. The Archbishop of *Granada* ‡, in the Council of *Trent*, had such an Idea of the Word *Colleague*, that from the Pope's being called the *Colleague* of the Bishops in the ancient Epistles, he was induced to think, *That it was contrary to the Nature of a College, that it should be made up of Persons of different Offices*. If this was good Reasoning for an Archbishop, to alledge the Equality of Office among all Bishops || and the Pope, from their being called *Colleagues*, it will equally hold good for the Sameness of Office in the present Case.

Again, we shall next adduce the Testimony of *Firmilian* Bishop of *Cæsarea*, which runs thus,
 “ * It is necessary with us, that we the *Seniors* and
 “ *Presidents* should yearly assemble together, for
 “ the managing of these Things that are committed to our Care; that if there be any Matters of

N n 2

“ Weight

† Epist. 110, 137. ‡ Esse contra Collegii Naturam, ut constet ex diversis generis personis. Petri Suavii Hist. Concil. Trident. L. 7, P. 679.

|| See *Burnet* on the 39 Art. Page 353. Line 20. And Dr. *Barrow's* Pope's Supremacy, Page 229, &c. And Dr. *Stilling.* Iren. Page 336. * Necesse est apud nos sit, ut per singulos annos *Seniores & Præpositi*, in unum conveniamus, ad disponenda ea quæ curæ nostræ commissa sunt; ut si

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“ Weight, they may be ordered by common Advice. No Hereticks, who have cut themselves off from the Church of God, can have any Power or Interest, seeing all Power and Interest is lodged in the Church, where the Elders preside, who also are possessed of the Power of Baptising, Imposing the Hand, and Ordination.” Here, it is easy to observe, that *Firmilian* does not allow the Power of Baptism to any, but such as have the Power of Imposing the Hand and Ordination; and so, none could have a Title to the first, without the other two, namely Confirmation and Ordination. In a Word, the three Powers here spoken of, are given to the Elders of whom *Firmilian* speaks, which were the same Persons he before called *Seniors* and *Presidents*, who did yearly assemble to determine Matters of common Concern to the Church. Thus, tho’ *Firmilian* had in *Cæsarea* several Presbyters under him, as was in Use, and obtain’d in his Day; yet it is manifest, he did not dream of Christ’s having institute different Orders of Pastors in the Church, the one having but the Power of Preaching and Baptising, and the other more extensive, as being possessed of Confirmation and Ordination also. The contrary of this is clear, and nothing but the Force of Prejudice can reject it. Nay, in this same Epistle, he observes the Stile of the Age in which he lived, and bottoms the Episcopacy he pleads for, on our Lord’s Words to Peter; *Whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven: And whatsoever thou*

quæ graviora sint, Communi Consilio dirigantur. Sed ceteri quique Heretici, si se ab Ecclesiâ Dei ceciderint, nihil habere potestatis aut gratiæ possunt; quando omnis potestas & gratia in Ecclesiâ constituta, ubi præsident majores natu, qui & Baptizandi, & manum imponendi, & Ordinandi possident Potestatem. Firmil. Epist. ad Cypr. Inter Cyprianas 74.

thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven. Now, this being the Argument insisted on by Firmilian and others in that Age, for the Precedency of Bishops to Presbyters, it were a Contradiction to say, they believed Bishops to be of a superior Order to Presbyters; seeing he was no more above them, than Peter was above the rest of the Apostles, whom all the Writers at that Time maintain'd to be equal in Honour and Power to Peter. And so, unless we should maintain Contradictions, the Judgment of Firmilian was, That as all the Apostles were equal in Honour and Power to Peter; so Presbyters, by Divine Institution, were equal in Honour and Power to Bishops. From the same Topick Basil Bishop of *Cæsarea*, who came after Firmilian, and died about the Year 378. asserts the Equality of all Pastors and Doctors. For, on these Words of Christ to Peter, *Lovest thou me more than these, Feed my Sheep*; he says, * *He gave an equal Power to all Pastors and Doctors that were to come after. And it is a Sign of this, that they all bind and loose in like Manner as he did.* This is plain Language for the Divine Institution of Parity among all Doctors and Pastors in the Church: And he is no less full to the same Purpose, in his Commentary † on the third Chapter of *Isaiab*. And elsewhere, he says, ‡ *Whatever Things are said of Bishops and Presbyters, they are said conjunctly.* And

N n 3

so,

* Πέτρε γὰρ Φήσι, Φίλῳς μέ πλείον τούτων; ποιμαίνε τὰ πρόβατά μου. Καὶ πᾶσι δὲ τοῖς ἱερεῶσι ποιμέσι καὶ διδασκάλοις τὴν ἴσιν παρέχοντος ἐξουσίαν. Καὶ τούτου σῆμα ἐν τῷ δεσμεῖν ὁμοῖως καὶ λύειν ὡς περ ἐκεῖνος. *Constit. Monast. C. 22.* † Ὁ ὅποσον τῆς προεδρίας ἀξιώθεϊς καὶ ἐγκαταλείγεις, τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ, ὅτος πρεσβύτερος ἢ ὁ φέρων χαρακτηριστὴρα πρεσβυτέρου ἀνεγκλήτως, μάλιστα μὲν ἀπείρατος γυναικος. Ἐν δευτέρῳ κατὰ τὸν τοῦ κυρίου νόμον μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἀνὴρ. -- ὅτος πρεσβύτερος. *Comm. in Isai. 3.* ‡ Ὅσα κατὰ συνάφειαν ἔρηται περὶ ἐπισκόπων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων. *Apud Blond. Page 63.*

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so, according to him, whatever Rules the Scripture gives with Respect unto Bishops, they equally hold good with Respect to Presbyters; which is a clear Evidence, he did not believe the Divine Institution of *Bishops above Presbyters*. In a Word, this makes all the Rules that are laid down by the Apostle *Paul*, to belong equally and in common to Bishops and Presbyters; which is a strong Argument of their Original Equality in Office. And if we shall look back towards the Beginning of the 4th Century, we shall have *Eusebius* Bishop of *Cæsarea* speaking much in the same Strain, and making the Office of Presbyter to be the highest Dignity in the Church. For, when treating of the Ordination of *Origen*, he says, * *Theoctistus Bishop of Cæsarea, and Alexander Bishop of Jerusalem, when they judged Origen worthy of the highest Authority and Honour, they put their Hands on him, that he might perform the Office of a Presbyter*. This, I cannot help thinking, imports, that *Origen*, in his Opinion, was placed in the highest Authority and Honour in the Church, when he was ordained to the Office of the Presbyterate. And that the Church was governed by the common Counsel of the Clergy, does no less appear, when he says, † *There are three Orders in every Church; the Rulers One, and the other two truly of these who are ruled; the People of the Church of Christ are divided into two Classes, the one of the Faithful, the other of those who are not reckon'd worthy of the Holy Sacrament of Regeneration; that is, the Catechumeni*.

These

* *Theoctistus Cæsareæ, & Alexander Hierosolymorum Episcopi, cum Prærogativis supremoque honore dignum Originem probavissent, ei manus, ut Presbyterio fungeretur imposuerunt, Euseb. Lib. 6. Cap. 7.*
 † *Tres in Ecclesiâ quæque ordines sunt; Ductorum unus, subditorum vero alii duo; Ecclesiæ Christi populo in duas classes diviso, altera fidelium, & altera eorum qui regenerationis Lavacro digni nondum habiti sunt, Euseb. Lib. 7.*

These Things compared together, give us a clear View that in the Judgment of *Eusebius*, the Office of Presbyter was the highest Dignity and Honour in the Church, and at the same Time, that there was but one Order of Officers that had the Rule and Government thereof. That there was a remarkable Change in the Polity of the Church in his Time, from what it was in the Beginning, is certain; this much *Hilary*, * whom we before mentioned, is very exprefs in, when he says, "After
" that the Churches were planted in all Places,
" and Officers ordained, Matters were settled after
" another Manner than what they were in the Beginning. ----- Thence it was that the Writings of
" the Apostles do not in every Thing agree to the
" present Constitution of the Church, because
" they were written under the first Rise of the
" Church." And tho' this Author lived after *Eusebius*; yet he says in the same Place, *and in Egypt even at this Day, the Presbyters ordain in the Bishop's Absence.* And on 1 *Tim.* 3. he speaks thus, *The Apostle straightway subjoins the Ordination of Deacons after Bishops. Why? but because the Ordination of Presbyters and Bishops is the same, for both are Priests, but the Bishop first.* And the Author † of the *Questions on the Old and New Testament*, on the last mentioned Text, exactly agrees with *Hilary*,

N n 4

while

* On Eph. 4. † Presbyterum autem intelligi Episcopum probat Paulus Apostolus, quando Timotheum, quem ordinavit Presbyterum, instruit qualem debeat creare Episcopum. Quid est enim Episcopus, nisi primus Presbyter, hoc est, summus Sacerdos? Denique non aliter quam cum Presbyteros hic vocat & Consacerdotes suos. Nunquid ministros *Condiaconos* suos dicit Episcopus? --- Nam in Alexandria & per totam Egyptum, si desit Episcopus, consecrat Presbyter. &c. Quest. 101. Nunquid Diaconus vicem potest gerere Sacerdotis? Praefectus enim potest agere vicem Praefecti, & Praetor Praetoris, non tamen privatus potest agere vicem potestatis alicujus; quanto magis Sacerdotis vicem agere potest, qui non est Sacerdos? Quest. 46.

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while he observes, that “ *Paul* the Apostle proves, “ that by *Presbyter*, *Bishop* is to be understood, “ when he instructs *Timothy*, whom he ordained “ a *Presbyter*, what Sort of *Bishops* he ought to “ ordain. For what is a *Bishop*, but the first “ *Presbyter*, that is, the High Priest?” He immediately adds, “ For in *Alexandria* and through- “ out all *Egypt*, if the *Bishop* be absent, the *Pres-* “ *byters* consecrate,” &c. This much, and more that might be adduced from him, clearly intimates the original Equality of *Presbyter* and *Bishop*. And it is a plain Case, That the Power of Consecration or Ordination could never in any Case be exercised by *Presbyters*, if it was not included in their Office: And therefore the same ancient Writer puts the Question, “ Whether can a “ *Deacon* supply the Place of *Priests*? A *President* “ may supply the Place of a *President*, and a *Præ-* “ *tor* of a *Prætor*, nevertheless a private Person “ cannot execute an Office of Power; much less “ can he who is not a *Priest*, execute the Office.” Will any say, that this Author ever dream’d that *Presbyter* and *Bishop* were two distinct Offices by Divine Institution?

Again, *Gregory Nazianzen*, who is said to have died about the Year 389. is very full to our Purpose, and maintains, that the Apostle *Paul* laid down the same Rules for *Presbyters* and *Bishops*, and clearly ascribes to them the same Office and Character, in many Places. I shall only give a few Scrapes from him, * The first is, “ Would to “ God there were no Prelacy, no Prerogative of “ Place, no tyrannical Privileges, that by Virtue “ alone we might be discerned, Now this right “ and

* See Jamieson's Nazianzeni Querel. Title Page. Or Gr. Naz. Plat. 28.

“ and left Hand, and middle Rank, these higher
 “ and lower Dignities, and this State like Prece-
 “ dency, have caused many fruitless Conflicts and
 “ Bruises, have cast many into the Pit, and car-
 “ ried away Multitudes to the Place of the Goats.”

And so when speaking of the Office of Presbyters, he says, || *As the Presbyter is a Minister, he is to preach; as he is a Ruler, he is to make Rules (or Canons) for Bishops and Presbyters.* And further, *He ascends from being governed to be a Governour;* again, *He is to feed the souls of Men; to lead and conduct others in the Way of Truth; to act the joint Priest with Christ; to build and rear up the World that is above; ----- Nay, and to be a Head of the Fulness of Christ.* And Gregory Nyssene, who died about the Year 395. about the Middle of his Homily εις υπαπαντην, addressees himself to † Church Rulers of whatever Denomination, and classes all of them in the Order of Presbyters; by which he clearly intimates the paternal Right and Authority of Presbyters to govern the People of God. To these let us add the Testimony of Chrysostom, who died about the Year 407. in his 11 Homily on 1 Tim. namely, ‡ “ that the Apostle having discour-
 “ fed concerning Bishops, and describ’d them, in-
 “ timating

|| Εἴτε λειτουργίαν χρηρ λέγειν, εἴτε ἡγεμονίαν, καγόν:ς περὶ ἐπισκόπων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων ἔταξε. ----- ἐπὶ τὸ ἀρχεῖν ἀναβαίνουσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρχεσ-
 θαι. ----- ἀνθρώπων ἐπιστατεῖν ψυχὰς, καὶ ὀρθοῦν ἄλλους καὶ διευθύνειν, χρ.ῶ συνιερέειν τῷ ἄνω κόσμῳ διμίσργει; ----- κεφαλὴ χρ.ῶ πλη-
 ρώματος. Apud Blondel. Apol. P. 64, † πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ τοὺς καθ’
 ὑμᾶς τῇ πολιᾷ τῆς ἁνῶς Προησεως κεκοσμημένους, καὶ πρεσβυτέρους ὄντας;
 ὑπάρχοντας, καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας πατεράς χρηματίζοντας ὁ θεὸς ὁδ.γεί λο-
 γος. ‡ τὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τάγμα ἄφεις εἰς τοὺς διακόνους μετεπήδησε
 τί δήποτε; ὅτι οὐ πολὺ τὸ μέσον, καὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτοὶ διδασκαλίαν εἰσὶν
 ἀνεδεδεγμένοι, καὶ προσασίαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας, καὶ ἂ περὶ ἐπισκόπων εἴτε,
 ταῦτα καὶ περὶ πρεσβυτέρων ἀρμόττει. τὴν γὰρ χειροτονίαν μόνον ἐκ-
 τῶν ὑπερβεβηκότες, καὶ τοῦτο μόνον δοκοῦσι πλεονεκτηῖν τοὺς πρεσ-
 βυτέρους. Hom. 11. in 1 Tim.

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“ timating what they ought to have, and from
 “ what they ought to abstain ; omitting the Order
 “ of Presbyters, he descends to the Deacons ; and
 “ why so ? but because between Bishop and Pres-
 “ byter there is no great Mids ; and to them is
 “ committed the Instruction and Precedency of
 “ the Church ; and whatever is said of Bishops,
 “ corresponds or is fitly accommodate to Presby-
 “ ters.” He adds, “ In Ordination alone they
 “ [the Bishops] seem to have gone beyond and
 “ defrauded the Presbyters.” He who lived so
 long after the Change was introduced into the
 Church, might justly say, Bishops had defrauded
 the Presbyters, which is the real Import of *πλεον-
 εκτείνω*, as is evident from the Use the Apostle
 makes of the same Word, 1 *Thess.* 4. 6. Now, if
 we remind, that *Nazianzen* wished there were no
Prelacy, or Prerogative of Place ; that Presbyters
 were Preachers and *Rulers* in the Church ; that the
 other *Gregory* expressly designs them *Rulers* ; and
 that *Chrysostom* says, there was little or no Odds
 between Presbyters and Bishops, save in Ordina-
 tion, in which the Presbyters were defrauded ;
 will any in their sober Thoughts say, that these
 Ancients had the smallest remains of Doubt about
 the original Equality between Bishops and Presby-
 ters ; or allow themselves to think that these be-
 liev’d the Divine Right of Bishops above Presby-
 ters ? This were too injurious an Impeachment of
 these Ancients, and to make them say one Thing
 and think another. I might here add the Words of
Theophylact * whom *Stillingfleet* calls the *Epitoma-*
tor

* τί δήποτε τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους παρέλιπεν ; ὅτι ἀνέμειξεν αὐτοῖς : ὡς
 γὰρ περὶ ἐπισκόπων εἶπε, ταῦτα καὶ περὶ πρεσβυτέρων ἀρμοζει. ὁμοίως
 γὰρ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἱεροῦν τὰ εἶσι, καὶ διδασκαλίαν εἰσὶ πεπισημηνυμένοι. Apud
 Blond. Apol. P. 66.

tor of *Chrysoftom*; but for brevity's Sake shall cast his Words on the Foot of the Page.

The next Testimony I shall adduce, is from *Pelagius*, who was Co-temporary with *Austin*. He says in his † *Commentary* on 1 *Tim.* 3. " Why did " the Apostle make no mention of Presbyters, but " comprehend them under the Name of Bishops? " because they are the Second, yea almost one " and the same Degree with Bishops, as the Apo- " stle writes in the Epistle to the *Philippians*; to " the Bishops and Deacons; when yet in one Ci- " ty, there cannot be moe Bishops than one: And " in the Acts of the Apostles, *Paul* having, in his " Way to *Jerusalem*, called the Elders of *Ephesus*, " among other Things said, take heed unto the " Flock, in which the Holy Ghost has ordained " you Bishops." Besides, on 1 *Cor.* 1. He de- clares all Priests to be the Successors of the Apo- stles. The Testimony of *Austin* being already mentioned, I shall next mention that of *Theodoret*, his Co-temporary, who says, on 1 *Tim.* 3. " The " Apostles call a Presbyter a Bishop, as we made " appear, when explaining the Epistle to the *Phi- " lippians*, which is also to be learned from this " Place; for after the Precepts proper to Bishops, " he describes the Things that belong to Deacons: " But as I said, of Old they design'd the same Men " both Bishops and Presbyters." This is a clear Discovery, that he was convinced of the original Equality of Bishops and Presbyters. On the same
Text

† Quæritur, cur de Presbyteris nullam fecerit mentionem, sed eos in Episcoporum nomine comprehenderit? quia secundus, imo penè unus est gradus, sicut ad Philippenses Episcopis & Diaconis scribit; cum una Civitas plures Episcopos habere non possit: & in actibus Apostolorum, Presbyteros Ecclesiæ, iturus Hierosolymas, congregans, ait inter cætera, Videte Gregem in quo vos Spiritus Sanctus Episcopos ordinavit
Comment. in 1 *Tim.* 3.

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Text *Primasius* is put to it, how to account for the Apostles leaping from the Duties of Bishops to these of Deacons, without mentioning Presbyters; and is obliged to satisfy himself with the true Reason, namely, that *Bishops* and *Presbyters* are the *same Degree*. And in his *Argument* to the first Epistle to *Timothy*, he says, *the Apostle instructs Timothy concerning the Ordination of Bishops and Deacons*; and in his *Argument* to the Epistle to *Titus*, *Paul* warns him about the establishing a Presbytery; both which clearly evince, that he look'd on Presbyters and Bishops to be the same. And our Country-man *Sedulius*, who flourished in the same Age with these just now named, is most exprefs in his Commentary on *Tit. 1.* that Bishops and Presbyters by Divine Institution were in every Respect the same, and, in Contradiction to the Episcopal *Axiom*, maintains that there were moe Bishops in one City than one. This he instances in the Church of *Ephesus*, and compares the 17 and 28 Verses of the 20 of the *Acts* for a Proof. He wrote a complete Commentary on all the Epistles of *Paul*, and in his Explication of 1 *Tim. 3.* and *Tit. 1.* he is most exprefs for the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters; and when speaking on these Words 1 *Cor. 1. I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas*, he observes that there were moe Bishops than one in one City. But he must be excused, for he was brought up in a Kingdom, where Presbytery obtain'd, from 'tis first Conversion to Christianity, till the Arrival of *Palladius*.

Again, * *Amalarius*, who is thought to have flourish'd in the 9th Century, exactly copies after *Hilary* and *Jerom*, and clearly enough intimates, that the Ordination of Presbyters and Bishops were origi-

* Apud Blondel A. Ol. P. 81.

originally the same, and adopts the Words of *Jerom* in his Epistle to *Euagrius*. He is most express, that *as the Church increased, so she multiplied in Ecclesiastical Offices*; and this he borrows from *Hilary*, whom he reckon'd to have been *Ambrose* on the Epistles to *Timothy*. In a Word, when he comes to explain by what Custom Bishops came to be appointed, he adopts the Words of *Jerom* on the Epistle to *Titus*, and says, *As therefore Presbyters know, that by the Custom of the Church they are subject to him who is set over them; so let the Bishops know, they are greater than the Presbyters, rather by Custom than the Truth of the Lord's Disposition and ordering, and that they ought to govern the Church in Common*. *Rabanus Maurus* Bishop of *Mentz*, who flourish'd in the 9th Century, is no less express than *Amalarius*, for the original Equality of Bishops and Presbyters; for he says, *With the Ancients, Bishops and Presbyters were the same, because the first was a Name of Honour, and the Latter of Age or Experience*. These Words, as is observed by the judicious * *Blondel*, are borrowed from *Isidore* Bishop of *Sevil*; and he gives some other Passages from him to the same Purpose, which, as he observes, are partly borrowed from *Hilary*.

These Testimonies are more than sufficient to satisfy the unprejudic'd, that originally Bishops and Presbyters were the same; and consequently that the Church was governed by the common Council of Presbyters. Such as are satisfied with the Sacred Oracles, as the only Rule of Faith and Practice, will have no Scruple on this Point; but these who must needs pay a greater Regard to the Practice and prevailing Customs of uninspired Ages of the Church, must unavoidably wander in
endless

* Apol. l. 81.

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endless Labyrinths. The judicious and unprejudic'd will see, that however the Constitution of the Christian Church came from Time to Time to depart from the Apostolical Institution; yet its most learned Doctors and Writers, in every Age, were so far Witnesses to the Truth, as to own the Divine Original of Parity among Pastors, and did not plead for the Customs of their Times, to be founded upon, and in all Things agreeable to, the infallible Word of God; which is the Design of the present Testimonies adduced.

In the Appendix it is clearly made appear, that the Scripture-foundation of Church Government is Presbyterian, by the Testimony of many Modern Writers of the Episcopal Perswasion; and from the Learned Doctor *Reynolds*, that the Fathers were all on their Side, in maintaining the Original Identity of Bishops and Presbyters. And here let me add, that no less Episcopalian than *Bellarmin* (a) owns the same, when he says, that "*Medina* affirmed that *Jerom* was of the same Mind with *Aerius*, and not only *Jerom* was in this Heresy, but also *Ambrose*, *Austin*, *Sedulius*, *Primasius*, *Chrysostom*, *Theodore*, *OEcumenius*, and *Theophylact*. Therefore says *Medina*, these otherwise most holy Men, experienced in the Sacred Scriptures, were nevertheless condemn'd in this Sentiment by the Church, first in *Aerius*, then in the *Waldenses*, and last of all in *John Wiclef*." He adds, "Therefore of Old, this Sentiment of *Jerom*'s and of the Greek Fathers was overlook'd and tolerate, on account of the Honour and Respect that was due unto them: Whereas on the other Hand, it is still to be condemn'd as Heretical in other Hereticks, who

(a) De Cleric. L. 1. C. 15.

“ who in many other Things have declined from
 “ the Church.” From this it is easy to perceive,
 what Notion *Bellarmin* had of the *Fathers* on the
 Head of *Presbytery*, as well as *Medina*, and how
 little Confidence they had to put in them on the
 Point of the *Episcopate*; and at the same Time,
 from whom it is our *Episcopalians* borrow their
 Dialect, when they can tell that all the *Presbyterians*
 were long since condemned in *Aerius*. The
 Learned *Whitaker* (b) was of another Judgment;
 and is not ashamed to say, tho’ an *Episcopal* Do-
 ctor, That, “ If *Aerius* was a Heretick in this
 “ Point, he had *Jerom* to be his Neighbour in that
 “ Heresy, and not only him, but other *Fathers*
 “ both *Greek* and *Latin*, as is confessed by *Medi-*
 “ *na*. *Aerius* thought that *Presbyter* did not dif-
 “ fer from *Bishop* by any Divine Law and Autho-
 “ rity: And the same Thing was contended for
 “ by *Jerom*, and he defended it by these very
 “ Scripture Testimonies which *Aerius* did. But
 “ how Childishly and foolishly *Epiphanius* answe-
 “ red to these Testimonies, every one may see.”
 It is surprizing with what Confidence Men who
 profess themselves Protestants are pleased to talk
 and write, while it is so manifest to every judi-
 cious and impartial Considerer, who has but an or-
 dinary Acquaintance with Ecclesiastical History,
 that there has not been an Age, even since the
 Change was introduced into the Church, spoken
 of by *Jerom* and *Hilary*, in which there have not
 been Witnesses for the Divine Right of Parity a-
 mong all the Ministers of Word and Sacraments.
 Remarkable to this Purpose are the Words of *Rai-*
nerius Pisanus, who wrote about the Year 1250.
 when

(b) Cont. 4. Quest. 1. C. 3. Sect. 30. See Scillingfleet's Iren. P. 276.

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when speaking of the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, he says, "On three Accounts, among all the Sects which are or have been, there is none more destructive, than the poor People of *Lyons*. First, because it has been of the longest Duration; some say that this Sect has continued since the Time of *Pope Silvester*: Others, since the Days of the Apostles. 2. Because it is more Universal, for there is scarce any Part of the World, in which this Sect has not diffused itself. 3. Because all other Sects beget Horror in the Minds of Men, on account of the exceeding Grossness of their Blasphemies against God; whereas these of *Lyons* have a great Appearance of Sanctity, in that they live justly before Men, believe rightly concerning God, and all the Articles contain'd in the Creed; only they blaspheme and hate the Church." And *Jacobus* of *Riberia* says in his *Collections*, *The Waldenses were exquisite in Learning, and the Priests were not equal to them in Natural Abilities.* And *Rainerius* acknowledges, that he heard and saw a Country Peasant rehearse the whole Epistle of St. James to a Word, and many others among them who were perfectly acquainted with the New Testament. Now the *Waldenses* and their Offspring maintain there was no Difference between Presbyters and Bishops, and that the Degrees of the Ministry were the Image of the Beast describ'd in the Revelation. Thus *Rainerius*, who was far from being their Friend, most freely acknowledges, that this Sect was diffused almost every where through the World, and according to some, had continued from the Days of the Apostles; so that here we have a large Body of People, who still opposed the Change that was introduced into the Church, and whose Principles are accounted

accounted to have been much the same with these of *Luther* * and *Calvin*. And *Michael Cesennas* the Head of the *Minorites*, who flourished before the Year 1399, maintained, *That all Priests of whatever Degree were of equal Power, Authority and Jurisdiction, by the Institution of Christ*. These Passages which I have borrowed from the Learned *Calderwood* (x) not having the Authors before me, do clearly evidence, that even in the darkest Times of Popery, and when it was in its most flourishing State, there were not wanting a Cloud of Witnesses against the raised Power of Bishops above Presbyters, and for the Original Equality of both. As for later Testimonies, it were too tedious to recite their Words. I shall only add, what *Cassander* (z) says, namely, *It is agreed among all, that of Old in the Days of the Apostles, there was no difference between Bishops and Presbyters*. And the famous Mr. *Dodwel* (y) owns, *That the Constitution of Church Government which obtains at this Day, altho' it flows from the Apostles; yet it is later than the Writings of the New Testament, and therefore is not to be sought there*. But when the Scriptures are laid aside, it were worth while to know, by what Rule the Divine Right of Episcopacy is to be determined. *Lombard* (a) the great Father of the School-men says, " Having briefly spoken to the
 " seven Degrees of the Church, we have insinuate
 " what should belong to every One : And all of
 " them are Spiritual and Sacred; notwithstanding
 " the Canons determine, that only two Orders
 " ought to be termed Sacred by Way of Eminency,
 " cy, namely that of the *Diaconats*, and that of the

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* See Spanh: his Christian. P. 1595. &c. (x) Altar. Damasc. P. 263. 266. Edit. 1708. (z) Consul. Art. 14. (y) Parzen. Sect. 23. P. 34. (a) Lib. 4. Dist. 24.

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“ the *Presbyterate*, because we read, that the Primitive Church had only these two ; and of these
 “ alone we have the Command of the Apostle :
 “ For the Apostles did ordain Bishops and Presby-
 “ ters in every City.” Nay, *Estius* (b) who
 comments on *Lombard*, is of the same Judgment
 with him, and says, *That the Divine Right of Epis-*
copacy cannot be clearly prov'd from Scripture. And
Gratian, the great Patron of the *Canonists*, is of the
 same Judgment, as already was made appear. In
 a Word, not to insist on Testimonies from *Papists*
 on this Head, it is the Judgment of all the *reformed*
 Churches ; and even that of *England* gave the most
 undisguised Confession of the Original Equality
 of Presbyters and Bishops, about the Year 1537.
 at which Time they compil'd the Book intituled the
Instruction of a Christian Man, which was subscrib-
 ed by the Archbishop, Bishops, Arch-deacons, and
 Clergy of that Church, and dedicate to the King.
 In this Book, it is expressly asserted; that there is
 no mention in the New Testament of any Distin-
 ction of Officers, but only of *Deacons or Ministers*,
 and *Presbyters or Bishops*. The same Thing is held
 in the *Bishop's Book* to be seen in *Fox's Martyrology*,
 which is a clear Evidence of Bishop *Cranmer's*
 Judgment, and about 46 others who were con-
 cerned in the Compiling thereof. I conclude this
 Head in the Words of the *British Preacher*. “ The
 “ Old English Plainness and Sincerity, that gene-
 “ rous Integrity of Nature, and Honesty of Dis-
 “ position, which always argues true Greatness of
 “ Mind, and is usually accompanied with un-
 “ daunted Courage and Resolution, is in a great
 “ Measure lost, when so much Contempt is
 “ poured forth on these Things, which were for-
 merly

(b) Lib. 4. Dist. 24. Sect. 25.

“merly confessed and ingenuously owned for
“Truths, and that on the surest Evidence.” See
critical History of England, Vol. 2. P. 347. &c.

S E C T. VI.

Of the original Equality of all Churches, and their Rulers: This also overturned by the introducing of the Order and Power of Bishops over Presbyters. For the Bishops in the greater Cities brought down the Country Bishops and swallowed up their smaller Dioceses, and these City Bishops were subjected to the Metropolitans, or Arch-Bishops, and over these were the Primates advanced, till at last the supreme Honour of universal Bishop was bestowed on the Bishop of Rome.

THERE remains one Thing further to be considered, for clearing what was said about the Change introduced into the Church from what obtained in the Days of the Apostles, and for some considerable Time thereafter; namely, that originally, and by Apostolick Institution, all Churches in the Christian World stood on an equal Footing, and none of them, SEPARATELY consider'd, had any Authority or Power over another. The Church of *Rome* had no more Power over the Church of *Corinth*, *Ephesus* and *Antioch*, or any other particular Church, than any of these had over *Rome*. Thus, according to the original State of Things, the Rulers of any one particular Church had no Title or Right to give Laws to a Sister Church, or lord it over her, however small or otherwise unequal in Numbers, Wealth or outward Privileges. This was a Work in which the smallest Rural Bishop, or they who were but in

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meaner Cities, were equally concerned in, with these who had their Settlements in the most renowned and frequent *Metropoles*. Thus *Jerom* (a) says, *Wherever any Bishop is, whether it be at Rome, Eugubium, Constantinople, Rhegium, Alexandria, or Tanis, he is of the same Account and of the same Order*: For, says he, the Power of Wealth, or Lowness of Poverty do not make a Bishop higher or lower, they are all Successors of the Apostles. All particular Churches are Sisters, Members of the same Body, and Branches of the same true Vine, begot by the same incorruptible Seed, and educate in the same Catholick Family, and so Daughters of Sarah, and Co-heirs of the same Inheritance; but not of the Handmaid Hagar. Thus the Nature of the Thing clearly evinceth, that all Churches stand on an equal Footing and Level; and consequently their Rulers were of the same Nature, and these in one Church had no Superiority over those in another. In the Synod at *Jerusalem*, the Elders from the several Churches were present, and the Matters that were of a common Concern to all of them were transacted by a joynt course of Management, without the Church of *Jerusalem's* assuming any absolute Power over any of the other Churches represented in that Assembly. Remarkable to this Purpose are the Words of * *Spalatensis* when speaking of the Unity of the Catholick Church, which for Brevity's Sake I have cast on the Foot. The Church is a Body, which
ha:

(a) *Epil. 85. ad Euagr.* * Hæc unitas est unius totius integralis in re Quantitativa Homogenea. quæ habet partes, non duntaxat integrantes, sed Homogeneas: - Ecclesia hæc una est. unius magnus Grex, cujus partes & Particulæ, non subjeptive, non Morales aut Metaphysicæ, sed mere & purè integrantes; Homogeneæ tamen & ejusdem rationis particulares Ecclesiæ, & majores & minores. De Polit. Ecclesi. l. 3. c. 2. Num. 10.

has but one great Doctor and fovereign Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, and Sacred Writ exprefly prohibits her to own any other on Earth: *Ye are all Brethren; and call ye not any Man Father upon Earth, for one is your Father, even he that is in Heaven; neither be ye called Masters, for one is your Master, even Christ*, Mat. 23. 8, 9. Thus the great Basil says *, That, according to St. Paul, *We are the Body of Christ, and Members one of another; because it is manifest that the one and sole true Head, which is Christ, doth hold and connect each one to another unto Concord*. And Austin says, “ Whole
 “ † Christ is the Head and the Body; the Head
 “ the only Begotten Son of God, and his Body
 “ the Church, the Bridegroom and Spouse, these
 “ two in one Flesh. Whosoever disagree, about
 “ the Head, from the Holy Scriptures, though
 “ they are found in all Places in the Earth where
 “ there is a Church, yet they are not of the Church.” It was the Province of every (a) particular Church planted by the Apostles, to decide Controversies, and they that were not obsequious, were to be repute as *Heathens and Publicans*; to censure and reject Offenders whether in Doctrine or Demeanour; and preserve Order and Decency among the several Members that were in any particular Church, according to the Rules prescribed by the Apostle; and thus promote Edification,

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and

* Κρατούσης δὲλον ὅτι καὶ συναπτούσης ἕκαστον τῷ ἄλλῳ πρὸς ὁμόνοιαν, τῆς μ. αὐς καὶ μονῆς ἀληθῶς κεφαλῆς, ἥτις ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός. Basil. Mag. de Jud. Divi. Tom. 2. P. 261. † Totus Christus caput & corpus est; caput unigenitus Dei Filius, & corpus ejus Ecclesia, sponsus & sponsa, duo in unâ carne. Quicunque de ipso a scripturis sanctis dissentiunt, etiam in omnibus locis inveniantur in quibus Ecclesia designata est, non sunt Ecclesię, &c. Aug. de unit. Eccles. C. 4. (a) Mat. 18. 17. 1 Tim. 3. 15. Rgv. 2. 1 Cor. 5. 1 Cor. 14. 1 Thes. 5. 14. Rom. 14. 19. 1 Cor. 6. 1.

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and decide all Causes competent to them. This is a manifest Discovery of the original Equality of all Churches, and their Rulers, and that there was not any one Church had a Superiority of Power over any other Sister or neighbouring Church. The contrary Notion evidently establishes a Principle, diametrically opposite to that *Liberty wherewith Christ has made his Churches free*, and manifestly intangles them with a yoke of Bondage, which the Apostle exhorts the *Galatian Churches* to resist, and under no Pretences whatsoever to embrace (a). Thus tho' a Combination of particular Churches in one Assembly is consistent with the Liberty of every one of these, and exactly agrees with their original Equality; yet for any one of them *separately* to exercise Jurisdiction over another, or deprive them of their Privileges as a Church, is the Spirit of Tyranny, and contrary to all the Notions of Christ's House.

The same Thing is manifest even from Antiquity: For *Cyprian* in his Letter to *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome*, occasioned by the Factions of some Clergy-men, says, *These Things I have briefly written back, according to our Meanness; prescribing to none nor prejudging, that every Bishop should not do what he thinks good, having a free Power of his Will.* And in his Preface to the Council of *Carthage*, * he says, " It remaineth that each of us do express his Judgment about this Matter, judging no Man, nor removing any Man, if he differeth, from the Right of Communion; for neither doth

(a) Gal. 5. 1. Gal. 1. 8. * Superest, ut de hac re singuli, quid sentiamus, proferamus, neminem judicantes aut a jure Communionis aliquem, si diversum senserit, amoventes; neque enim quisquam nostrum Episcopum se esse Episcoporum constituit, aut tyrannico terrore ad obsequendi necessitatem Collegas suos adigit; quando habet omnis Episcopus prolientia libertatis, &c. Prefat. Conc. Carthag.

“ doth any of us constitute himself Bishop of Bishops, or by tyrannical Terror drive his Col-
 “ leagues to a Necessity of obeying; when as eve-
 “ ry Bishop hath, on Account of his Liberty and
 “ Authority, his own free Choice, and is no less
 “ exempted from being judged by another, than
 “ he is incapable to judge another; but let us all
 “ expect the Judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 “ who, and who alone hath Power to prefer us to
 “ the Government of his Church, and to judge of
 “ our acting.” Here it is observable, that when
 Cyprian delivered himself in this Strain, he spoke
 as Prolocutor of the *Synod of Carthage*. And tho’
 the Occasion on which he had this Oration, is an
 Evidence of the joynt course of Management that
 was observed by the Rulers of several distinct
 Churches in one Ecclesiastick Assembly, for ad-
 justing Matters of common Concern to all of them;
 yet he disclaims the supereminent Power of any
 Bishop or Church, *separately* considered, over his
 neighbouring Bishop or Sister-Church. And this
 was not an Opinion peculiar to Cyprian; for Au-
 stin (a) in his *Animadversions* on that Synod, in ve-
 ry strong Terms approves of his Preface, and de-
 clares the Conformity of his own Practice there-
 unto. The same Thing is confirmed by the Ad-
 dress of the *Roman Clergy* to Cyprian, in these
 Words*, “ Although a Mind fully conscious to it
 “ self, and having in Spiritual Doctrines become
 “ a true Witness to it self, is satisfied with God a-
 “ lone for its Judge; and neither affects the Praises
 “ of

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(a) De Baptis. contr. Donatist. L. 2. C. 3. * Quamquam bene sibi
 conscius animus, & Evangelicæ disciplinæ vigore subnixus, & verus sibi
 in decretis Cœlestibus testis effectus, facit solo Deo iudice esse conten-
 tos, nec alterius aut laudes petere, aut Accusationes pertimescere, &c.
 Cler. Rom. ad Cyprian. Ep. 31.

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“ of another, nor is afraid of his Accusations :
 “ Yet they are worthy of double Praise, who,
 “ when they knew they owe their Consciences to
 “ God alone as Judge, yet also desire their Acti-
 “ ons to be approved by their Brethren; the
 “ which is no wonder that you Brother *Cyprian*
 “ should do, who according to your Modesty and
 “ natural Industry, wouldst have us not so much
 “ Judges, as Partakers of your Counsels.” They
 add, “ Because of the Difficulty of Things we
 “ could not constitute a Bishop who might mo-
 “ derate in our Affairs.” Thus it is manifest that
 the College of the *Roman* Clergy were not afraid
 of calling *Cyprian* their *Brother*; and consequently
 look’d on themselves as his Equals, and at the same
 Time owned that that Church, which now lays
 claim to be the Head of all others, had no jurisdic-
 tional Power over these in *Carthage*. Besides,
 the Synod of *Antioch*, in which there were Ninety
 seven Bishops, wrote to *Julius* Bishop of *Rome*,
 on account of his Carriage in the Case of *Athanasius*,
 and say (a), *They did not therefore think it equal,*
that they should be thought Inferiors, because they
had not so big and numerous a Church. In like
 Manner, the old Synod of *Arles* direct their E-
 pistle to *Signior Sylvester* their *Brother*. And *A-*
thanasius says, *These Things may suffice, which*
have been written by our beloved and fellow Minister,
Damasus Bishop of great Rome. *Marcellus* inscrib-
 ed to Pope *Julius*, in these Words, *To his most blef-*
sed fellow Minister. And *Cyril* speaks of Pope *Cele-*
stine I. in this Strain, *Our Brother and fellow Mi-*
nister the Bishop of Rome. And *St. Basil* and his fel-
 low Bishops of the East did inscribe their Epistle
 after this Manner, *To the beloved of God, and our*
 most

(a) Sozom. Lib. 3. Cap. 7.

most holy Brethren and fellow Ministers, the unanimous Bishops through Italy and France (a). These, and many other Instances of the like Nature which might be adduced, plainly discover, that the particular Churches of the Catholick Body were all owned to be on an equal Footing, and none of them separately had Power to give Laws to another.

But to ascend a little higher, *Irenæus* had no View of any such Subordination in the Catholick Church, when he says of it, * *The Church is but as one House, and as having one Soul, and one Heart, it stedfastly teaches and preaches the same Doctrine, having, as it were, but one Mouth.* This lets us see that the Unity of the Catholick Church, did not consist in the Subordination of any one particular Church therein to another, as a Term of Union, but in their all agreeing in the same Apostolical Doctrine. And so *Tertullian* † speaks to the same Purpose, when he gives an Account of the Church's Unity, as consisting, " In her adhering
" to that Doctrine which was first preached by
" the Apostles, who having first delivered it in
" Judea, and planted Churches there, went a-
" broad and delivered the same to other Nations,
" and settled Churches in Cities, from whence
" other Churches have the same Doctrine propa-
" gate

(*) See Barrow Pope's Supr. Pag. 229. * Quasi unam domum inhabitans, --- quasi unam habens animam, & unum Cor, & constantè hæc prædicat, & docet, & tradit, quasi unum possidens Os. Iren. Adv. Hæc. Lib. 1. Cap. 3. † Statim igitur Apostoli --- imo. per Judæam contestatâ Fide in Jesum Christum, & Ecclesiis constitutis, deinde in orbem profecti, eandem Doctrinam ejusdem fidei Nationibus promulgaverunt, & proinde Ecclesias apud unumquamque civitatem condiderunt, a quibus traducem Fidei & semina Doctrinæ ceteræ ex inde Ecclesiæ mutuata sunt, & quotidie mutantur, ut Ecclesiæ fiant: ac per hoc & ipsæ Apostolicæ deputantur, ut soboles Apostolicarum Ecclesiarum, &c. Tert. de Prescrip. Hæretic. Cap. 20.

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“ gate to them, which are therefore called Apostolical Churches, as the Offspring of those which were founded by them. Therefore so many and so great Churches are all that One Prime and Apostolical Church from whence all others come. And thus they are all prime and Apostolical in regard of their Unity, as long as there is that Communication of that Title of Brotherhood, and common Work of Peace and Hospitality.” In the same Manner we find * *Theodoret* delivering himself on *Psal.* 47. 4. Now in all these, there is not the smallest Intimation of the Church’s being united in any such Subordination as makes one particular Church have Jurisdiction over another, but in the sameness of Apostolical Doctrine.

And if we shall take a View of the Unity of the Catholick Church, which arises from its Government, then it will still appear to be a *whole* consisting of *Homogeneal Parts*, without any Subordination or Dependence. And so, about the middle of the 3d Century, we have *Cyprian* giving us an Account on what footing the Unity of the Catholick Church stood. Thus when the Schism of *Novatianus* broke forth in the Church of *Rome*, about the Election of *Cornelius*, *Cyprian* and the Churches of *Africk*, after enquiry into that Matter declared for *Cornelius*, and with them *Dionysius* and the Churches of *Alexandria* joyned; but *Fabius* of *Antioch* with the Churches of *Pontus* and *Cilicia* were more inclined to *Novatianus*, till after they were more

* Μία μὲν ἐστὶ κατὰ πάσαν γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν ἐκκλησία. διὰ προσευχόμενοι λέγομεν, ὑπὲρ ἀγίας καὶ μόνης καθολικῆς καὶ ἀποστολικῆς ἐκκλησίας, τῆς ἀπὸ περάτων ἕως περάτων τῆς οἰκουμένης. ὧτω μυρία καὶ ἀριθμοὶ κρείττους εἰσὶν ἐκκλησίαι, καὶ ἐν νήσοις καὶ ἐν ἡπείροις. εἰς μίαν δὲ κοινὴν πᾶσαι τεύξονται τῇ συμφωνίᾳ τῶν ἀληθῶν ἡνωμένοι δογματῶν. - Theod. in *Plal.* 47. 4. Tom. 1. Pag. 580.

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more fully informed of the Matter by *Dionysius*. Now on this Occasion we have a distinct Account from *Cyprian*, of the equal footing on which all Churches and Bishops stood. For in his Epistle to *Antonin* on the Occasion of this Schism, he says, † *The Bond of Concord remaining, and the Communion of the Catholick Church continuing, every Bishop orders and disposes his own Deed, as one that must give Account to God.* And thereafter he adds, *That there is one Church divided into many Members throughout the World, and one Episcopal Office spread Abroad, by the consenting Multitude of many Bishops.* Now if the Church be One in this Sense, and the whole Government of the Catholick Body but as one Episcopal Office, and all the Bishops unanimously joyning in the Government of it; then, according to the Mind of *Cyprian*, all Churches, smaller or greater in that huge Society, must stand on an equal Level, and every Bishop in it have an equal Care committed to him in the Government thereof. In the same Epistle he gives us to understand, that he had written to the Church of *Rome*, after the Death of *Fabian*, that he might give them his Advice how to manage in the Case of lapsed Persons, which Letter of his was sent Abroad through the Churches. *This*, says *Regalitus* in his Observations on *Cyprian*, * *had its Arise from the Unity of Ecclesiastical Discipline, where-*
by

† Manente concordie vinculo, & perseverante Catholice Ecclesie indivi-
duo Sacramento, actum suum disponit ac dirigit unusquisque Epis-
copus, rationem propositi sui Domino redditurus --- Cum sit a Christo
una Ecclesia per totum Mundum in multa Membra divisa: item Epis-
copatus unus, Episcoporum multorum Concordi Numerositate diffusus.
Cyprian Epist. 52. * Itaq; ex unitate Ecclesie Disciplinæ *Cyprianus*
solicitudinem omnium Ecclesiarum ad se pertinere non ambigens, etiam
Romam se dedisse Literas ait ad Clerum; eas verò Literas per totum
Mundum missas, Scil. per Ecclesiam Catholicam, cujus Ecclesie unus
est Episcopatus, &c. *Regalit. Observat. ad Cyp. P. 61.*

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by Cyprian, not doubting but that the Care of all the Churches was on him, dispatched his Letter to the Clergy at Rome; from whence it was sent through the Catholick Church, Part of which was committed in full Power to every Bishop. This gives us such a Notion of the Catholick Church, as makes it to be one Sacred Society, in which every Bishop has a Concern to maintain Order and Regularity, and preserve it from Schism. Thus Cyprian, in his *Book of the Unity of the Church* P. 208. gives such an Account of it, as overturns the Subordination of any Branch thereof unto another; for, says he, *Episcopatus unus est, cujus a singulis in solidum pars tenetur*. In this Expression if I mistake not, he makes the universal Government of the Church, to be as it were *One* Episcopal Office, which is committed in the several Parts thereof to particular Bishops, with full Power of Management; so that every Bishop has a full Power over that Part of the Flock which is committed to him, and a joynt Concern with the Rest in the Government of the whole Body. Agreeable to this he employed two of his Colleagues to go for *Rome*, namely *Caldonius* and *Fortunatus*, (b) that by their Presence and Counsell they might contribute their utmost to heal the Breaches that were in that Church, on account of the Schism that was raised about *Cornelius* and *Novatianus*. In a Word, the Deeds done by any particular Church were look'd upon as to be regarded throughout the whole Catholick Church, so as that the Sentence of Deposition or Excommunication pass'd against a Person within its Bounds was not to be relaxed by any other Church, however great and populous it might be, without the Concurrence and Consent of that Church by which it was inflicted.

(b) Cypr. Epist. 42.

inflicted. A remarkable Instance we have of this from *Synesius* Bishop of *Ptolemais*, when that Church excommunicate *Adronicus*; his Letter forbids all the Churches in the Earth to receive him into their Communion. And then he adds, † *If any shall despise this Church as being that of a little City, and shall receive such as are deposed by it, as if not bound to obey so poor a Church; he that divides the Church which Christ will have to be one, Let him know, &c.* This is a very clear Instance, that all the particular Churches in the Catholick Body, however small, or outwardly Poor, were on an equal Level with these in the most populous and flourishing Cities, and that their Deeds were of the same Force and equal Authority.

This much is sufficient to answer the present Design, and give the Unprejudiced to see, that originally, and during the first Ages of Christianity, all Churches were equal in Power and Authority within their own *Præcincts*; and that these in the most remarkable Cities, as they had no Jurisdiction over such as were in smaller Villages or lesser Towns; so all of them were on an equal Footing, and had the like Concern in the Government of the Catholick Body, of which each of them were Members.

This much being laid down as to the *Independency* of one particular Church on another, when *separately* considered, I shall only further observe these two Things from what hath been said. And, 1. That the Change introduced, and of which *Jerom* and *Hilary* make mention, opened a Door for the

† Εἰ δὲ τις ὡς μικροπολίτην ἀποσκυβαλίσει τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ δέξεται τοὺς ἀποκηρύκτους αὐτῆς, ὡς οὐκ ἀναγκὴ τῇ πείνῃ τι πέθεσθαι, ἴσῳ ὁ σκίσας τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, ἢ μὲν ὁ Χρῖστος εἶναι βούλεται. *Synesius Epist. 58.*

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the Bishops, in remarkable Cities, to swallow up and enhance to themselves a Power over the Churches in smaller Towns and Villages which lay next unto them, and had any Dependence on the City. That in these there were Bishops, has been already established on a former Head; and I shall only further observe, that the Learned *Cartwright* remarks, That the Towns in which the Bishops had their Charges, that were at the Council of *Carthage*, Anno 258. were of such small Consideration, that there were not above four or five of them whose Names were recorded in any ancient Geographical Tables. Besides, *Clemens Romanus* testifies, That the Apostles planted Bishops and Deacons in the Country, no less than in Cities; for, says he, * *In the Country and Cities where the Apostles preached, they ordained their first Fruits for Bishops and Deacons over those who should believe: Nor were these Orders new; for many Ages past, it was thus prophesied concerning Bishops and Deacons, I will appoint their Bishops in Righteousness, and their Deacons in Faith.* To the same Purpose we have the Mind of *Cyprian* †, namely, that *Bishops were ordained throughout all Provinces and Cities.* This is further confirmed from the Epistle of the Synod of *Antioch*, where it is said, that *Paulus Samosatenus had many Flatterers among the Bishops in the adjacent Cities and Country* ||. Now, tho' originally, and on the Back of the Change spoken of by *Jerom*, all Bishops, whether in large Cities or small Villages, were on an equal Footing, the Bishop of *Tanis* and *Eugubium* equal to those of *Rome* or *Constantinople*; yet it plainly appears, that these

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* Clem. Rom. Epist. 1. ad Corinth. Pag. 54. † Per omnes provincias, & per urbes singulas Ordinati sunt Episcopi Cyp. Ep. 52. || Euseb. L. 7. C. 29.

in larger Cities at last raised their Power over the Rural Bishops, no less than Bishops did at first over Presbyters. It became uneasy to the Bishops who were in opulent and large Cities, to think that those in Country Villages should be equal to them in Power; and therefore they laid out themselves to have the *Chorepiscopi* or Country Bishops depressed and born down. And for obtaining this End, they came to enact several Canons to pave the Way to, and bring it about. Thus, it was carried in the Council of *Laodicea*, That Bishops ought not to be ordain'd in Villages; but *Visitors* should be appointed to go about from Place to Place; and that these who were already ordain'd in Villages, should do nothing without the Knowledge of the Bishop of the City. And *Balsamo* on this Canon says, That other Canons have defined, that *Chorepiscopi* and *Presbyters* should be appointed in Villages and Country Places: But the present Canon appoints Visitors and not Bishops, lest, by Bishops being ordained in Villages, where there was no great Number of People to support the Honour of the Episcopate, it should render the Episcopal Dignity mean and contemptible. By this Canon, and *Balsamo's* Interpretation, it is evident to a Demonstration, That towards the East there were Bishops ordained in Country Places and Villages, as well as in large Cities: And, that before this Time, these who were Bishops in those Places acted independently on the Bishop of the City. They could not, all at once, have the Bishops in the Country Places reduced; and therefore it is only enacted in the Beginning, That those who were already ordained, should act with the Advice and Knowledge of the Bishop in the City; and, for preventing any for the future to have the Charge of

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of these Villages, which might give Ground to alledge their Independency on him, they appointed Visitors, which, according to *Balsamo*, were *Exarchs*, promoted by the Bishops to go about and visit the Country Places and Villages under them. And *Zonaras* on the same Canon says, they are called *περιοδεῦται*, or *Visitors*, because they had no fixed Charge or Seat, but went from Place to Place visiting the Faithful. *Filescus* * saith, If we shall follow the *Fus Canonicum* of the *Latins*, these *Visitors* were nothing else but *Arch-presbyters* or *Country Deacons*. *Justellus* on the same Canon lets us know, that these *Visitors* were such as went in a Circuit round all the Regions that were subjected unto the City, and were as the Bishop's Vicars, who had no particular fixed Residence. These Things give a clear View of the intent of this Canon; and, at the same Time, lets us see, That these *Visitors* were something quite different from the *Chorepiscopi* or Country Bishops, who had their particular fixed Charge or Diocese. This is manifest from *Balsamo*, in the Passage quoted from him, and here insert at the Foot, together with the † Canon of the Council of *Laodicea*. And *Justinian*

* De Origine Paroeciar. Page 570. † Non debere in Vicis, & Vil-
lis, Episcopos ordinari, sed Visitatores, i. e. qui circumeant, con-
stitui; hos autem qui antehac ordinati sunt, nihil agere censemus sine
Conscientiâ Episcopi Civitatis. Conc. Laod. Cap. 37. Dist. 80. *Balsamo*
in hunc Canonem, Alii quidem Canones in Vicis & Pagis Chorepiscopos
& Presbyteros constituendos definierunt. Præfens autem Canon jubet
fieri περιοδεύτας & non Episcopos, ne Dignitas Episcopalis vilis &
contempta evadat, utpote quum non habeat Pagum, in quo ordinatus
est Episcopus, hominum Multitudinem ad Dei Episcopatus Honorem.
Siqui autem ante Canonem sunt in his locis constituri Episcopi, ne ex-
ciantur, sed omnia exerceant cum sententiâ Metropolitanæ, qui eos Or-
dinavit, &c. *Zonaras* in eundem Canonem; Periodeutæ ex eo dicti, quod
nullibi propriam sedem cathedramque habentes, huc illuc fidelibus in
Officio continendis vagentur. *Justellus* in eundem Canonem, Sunt igitur
περιοδεῦται in Ecclesiâ Circitores five Visitatores, qui veluti Episco-
porum Vicarii regiones Civitatibus subjectas visitant ac circumeant,
nullamque propriam sedem habent.

nian || puts a manifest Difference between these two; for, when he has named the *Chorepiscopi*, he after mentions the *Visitors* or *Periodontæ*. Besides, they are distinguished by the Eighth Canon of the Council of *Antioch*; for there it is prescrib'd, ‡ That no Country Presbyter shall take upon him to write Canonical Epistles; but this was a Liberty belonging to the *Chorepiscopi* by the same Canon; which clearly enough discovers they had a fixed Residence and Episcopal Power. But the plain Fact is, it was a Thing not to be born with, that there should be Country Bishops, who should have but a small Number of People, not able to maintain their Dignity; this was greatly to the Dishonour of the City Bishops, who flourished in Numbers and Wealth, to have these for Brethren; and therefore they must be born down, and they and their Charges made subject to Bishops in sumptuous Cities.* Thus, in the Provincial Synod of *Laodicea*, about the Year 364. it is statuted, That Bishops ought not to be ordain'd in Villages or ordinary Towns, lest it bring the Name of Bishop into Contempt; but in remarkable Cities from whence their Dioceses were to derive their Name. But, not to insist on the Decretal Epistle of *Anacletus*, as is pretended; the Sixth Canon of the Council of *Sardis* declares, That it was not lawful to ordain a Bishop in any Village or small Town; where a Presbyter might suffice. It is not necessary, say they, to place a Bishop there, lest the Name and Authority of a Bishop should be brought into Contempt†. This was something very different from what *Jerom* said ||, as to the first Power of Bishops, That

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|| Lib. 41. C. de Episcop. & Clericis. ‡ Caranza Sum. Concil. Fol. 79. * Corp. Jur. Can. Dist. 80. C. 3. † Caranza Sum. Concil. Fol. 84. || Epist. 85. ad Evagr.

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the Power of Wealth, or the Lowness of Poverty, do not make a Bishop higher or lower, they are all the Successors of the Apostles. However, these Things let us see, how that the Bishops in remarkable Cities made it their Business, and embraced all Occasions to invade and monopolize unto themselves a Jurisdiction over the smaller Country Dioceses, which lay next unto them, and had any Dependence on the Cities in which they were seated; and, at the same Time, we may also discover, that the ancient Custom of the Church was, to ordain Bishops in Country Seats, small Towns and Villages, no less than in populous Cities. But it is not to be thought, that these Conquests were obtain'd without any Opposition; for it is clearly enough insinuate from the 8th Epistle of *Damasus*, and the 86th of *Leo*, That the Bishops in the Country Villages made a Stand against the Encroachments made on them; but the Force of Canons was what they were not able to withstand. By these the several Churches in Country Villages and Regions came all to make up one Church, denominate from the City to which they were subjected; and instead of the *Chorepiscopi*, there were Visiters appointed, who went from one Church to another, and visited the remoter Parts of the Bishop's Conquest. Such Bishops the primitive Church was ignorant of, and we may truly say, it was not so from the Beginning; but as in other Cases, one wrong Step paves the Way for others, as the Change spoken of by *Jerom* certainly did. And Bishop *Hooper* † owns, that such Kind of Bishops had not a Being till the Time of *Sylvester* the first. And it is remarkable what * *Filescus* says, namely,

† *Alraic Damas.* Pag. 219. * *De Orig. Paræciarum*, Page 537.

namely, that in a Council held about the Year 895. there was a Complaint made by the common People, that there were some Bishops, who in a whole Year would not visit their Parishes, either to confirm or preach. Thus we see the Effects of the Enlargement of Dioceses.

2. This Increase of Episcopal Power did not suffice; for the Dioceses of the City Bishops being once extended without the City, and enlarged to the Countries and Villages in the Province, the next Step of Grandure was the *Precedency* of these Bishops, according to the Preference of the City in which they had their Residence, and from which their Dioceses were denominate. Thus, by the 17th Canon of the Council of *Antioch*, it is decreed, 'That because of the great Confluence of People to that City, therefore he [the Bishop] shall have the Pre-eminence above the rest. And, according to *Stillingfleet**, the Model of the Church followed the Civil Government; especially after the Division of the *Roman Empire* by *Constantine the Great*. The Whole of this great Empire was divided into Thirteen Dioceses, of which Seven belong'd to the Eastern, and Six to the Western Division: And the Thirteen, together with the *Præfecture* of the City of *Rome*, contain'd among them about 120 Provinces. Now, every Province contain'd many Cities within its Bounds; and these Cities had their several Towns and Villages belonging to them. So, in almost each of these Cities there was a Bishop, who had the Government thereof, and the smaller Towns and Villages depending thereon. But then, in every Province there was an Archbishop, who was over the several Cities and Bishops therein, and had the Name of *Metro-*

* *Stillingfl. Iren Page 372.*

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politan. And, that they might be equal in every Thing to the Civil Government and Polity then in Being, as there were several Provinces in one Diocese; so, in the chief City of every Diocese, there was a *Primate*, who had the sovereign Care of all the Provinces, and to whom all Appeals relative to the Church were made. And so, from this short View it will appear, there were Eleven Primates, besides the three Patriarchs. The *Præfecture* of the City of *Rome*, as was observed, was under the Government of the Bishop of that City; the Diocese of Egypt was under the Care of the Patriarch of *Alexandria*; and that of the East under the Patriarch of *Antioch*; and all the rest were under the Care of the Primates. Between these and the Patriarchs there was no Difference as to Jurisdiction and Power, only some Degree of Honour was allow'd them on Account of the Dignity of their Sees, which is exprest in the 3d Canon of the Council of *Constantinople*. By this, that City is advanced to the Honorary Title of a *Patriarchate*, next to *Rome*; because it was *New Rome*. And so, the Honour that was conferred on the Bishop of *Old Rome* beyond the rest, had its Arise from its being the ancient Imperial City. From these Considerations the Learned *Stillingfleet* * concludes, That we may see the Original of the Power of *Archbishops, Metropolitans and Patriarchs* in the Church, namely, *the Contempering the Ecclesiastical Government to the Civil.*

Thus, from the whole we may see, That, as by the Introduction of the Change, by which one Presbyter was raised over the rest, and had the Name of Bishop appropriate unto him, he came at last to have the whole Power in his own Hand; so, the

* Iren. Pag. 378, 379.

the Bishops in populous and opulent Cities, by Reason of their great Power and Interest, came, in Time, to break through that Equality that was observed among Bishops, and to gratify their Pride, swallowed up the smaller Towns and Villages that had any Dependence on their City, and knock'd down their respective Bishops: And then, to complete all, these Bishops in Cities, came to be brought in Subjection to their Metropolitans, and these to their Primates, till, at length, the supreme Honour was bestowed on the Bishop of *Rome*, where, at last, the Mystery of Iniquity centred. From this Scheme of Things, I submit it to the Consideration of every sincere Protestant, if Episcopacy, from its first Beginnings, till it came to its outmost *Acme*, had any other Foundation but positive Ecclesiastical Laws, which were made from Time to Time, according to the several States and Conditions of the Church. Justly might the Learned *Salmasius* say, when speaking of this Change, that, "Whatever these Causes were, " Experience made it manifest, that by that new " Way of Government, which was afterwards " brought in, there was far greater Mischief introduced into the Church, than that which was " then feared; these Schisms and Dissensions afflicted only some particular Churches; --- but " that Pest, which, by that new Episcopal Government, invaded the Churches, did not afflict one " Church or two, but it oppressed and ruined, " with a most miserable Tyranny, the whole Body of the Church. Neither did that Domination " trample under Foot the Clergy alone, but also " the very Lords of the Earth." To the same Purpose are the Words of *Daneus*, " So long as the " Apostolick Constitution continued in the Church,

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“ the Presbyters that laboured in the Word and
 “ Doctrine, differed not at all from Bishops : But
 “ after that, by the Ambition of those who presi-
 “ ded over other Presbyters, and took to them-
 “ selves the Name of Bishops, the Apostolical
 “ Form of Government was abolished, then the
 “ Bishops began to be distinguished even from
 “ these Presbyters that preached the Word ; and
 “ to these Bishops, contrary to God’s Word, the
 “ whole Dignity was ascrib’d ; nothing thereof al-
 “ most being left to the Presbyters: Which Things,
 “ and the Ambition of the Bishops, did, in Time,
 “ ruin the whole Church, as the Matter itself pro-
 “ claims in the *Papacy*. And so, the Apostolick
 “ Episcopate was abolished, and a *Human* Epi-
 “ scopacy began, from which sprang the Satanick
 “ Episcopacy, as it is now in the *Papacy*. -----
 “ The Distinction of a Bishop from a Preaching
 “ Presbyter is *Juris Pontificii*, of the Pontifical and
 “ Positive Right, *vrz.* after that the Foundations
 “ of the Tyranny of the Bishops were laid ; but
 “ it is not of Divine Right.” These two remar-
 “ kable Passages I have borrowed from the Worthy
 “ Mr. *Jamieson* *, not having the Books before me :
 “ And shall only add in the Conclusion, a Sentence
 “ or two from *Gregory* and *Austin*. † If, says the first,
 “ you object Custom or long Practice, we must notice what
 “ our Lord says ; *I am the Way, the Truth and the*
 “ *Life ; he did not say, I am Custom, but the Truth.*
 “ The next is from *Austin*, || “ He who despises the
 “ Truth, and will needs follow Custom, is either
 “ highly wicked and injurious to his Brethren to
 “ whom

* *Cyp. Notim. Pag. 273, 274.* † *Greg. Guelmundo Aversano*
Episc. Dist. 8. Can. Si Coniuct. || *Lib. de Baptismo Parvul. Dist. 8.*
Can. Qui Contempra.

“ whom the Truth is revealed; or is ungrate to
 “ God, by whose Inspiration his Church is instruc-
 “ ted. For, our Lord says in the Gospel, *I am*
 “ *the Truth*; he said not, *I am the Custom*. There-
 “ fore, when Truth is manifested, let Custom yield
 “ to Truth: So, the Truth being reveal’d, let Cu-
 “ stom give Place unto it: For, *Peter* who circum-
 “ cised, yielded to *Paul* when declaring the Truth:
 “ Therefore, since Christ is the Truth, we ought
 “ rather to follow the Truth than Custom.” And
 here I cannot miss to subjoyn a Sentence of *Cyprian’s*, in his Epistle to *Jubian*, about the *Baptism of Hereticks*, *In vain do those that are overcome with Reason, cast up unto us the Antiquity of Custom, as if Custom was to be preferred to Truth, or, in Things of a spiritual Nature, we were not to follow the more excellent Thing revealed by the Holy Ghost.* Human Wisdom, if once it decline but in a Point from the Original Truth, it gradually grows worse and worse.

Thus then, if any shall pretend to ancient Custom, in favours of Episcopacy, we have an easy Answer to them, in the Words immediately cited; and shall only further remind them, that the Scriptures are more ancient than any Custom they can pretend unto; and our Lord has expressly requir’d us to take *Heed lest any Man spoil us through Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Traditions of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ.*

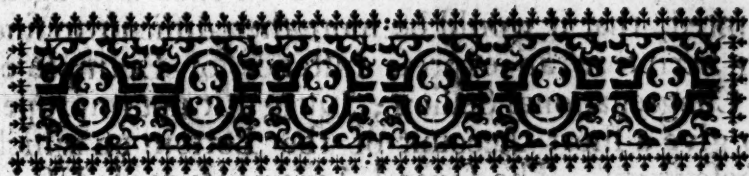
But, how much some follow the *Traditions of Men* in our Day, and yet call themselves Protestants, is manifest to every one who peruseth the Writings of a certain Set of Men in the Age. And for an Evidence hereof, I shall conclude this Chap-

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ter with the Words of an Occasional Paper, *Num. 2.*
“ The Fathers of our Reformation valued them-
“ selves as a principal Branch of the Protestant In-
“ terest, and cultivated a strict Friendship and
“ Union with these abroad, who agreed in the ge-
“ neral Principles of Separation from the Church
“ of *Rome*, tho’ they had different Sentiments of
“ some particular Doctrines, and chose another
“ Model of Church Government, and other Cir-
“ cumstances of Worship: But of late Years, and
“ especially in the impetuous Clamours of our
“ Time, *the Church* is made a Term of Distinction
“ from all other Protestants, rather than from
“ Popery, the People being taught to say, That
“ it is better to be a Papist, than a Presbyterian,
“ tho’ the most of the Foreign Protestants are
“ such.” For which, the Lord have Mercy on
them!



CHAP.



CHAP. V.

The different Way of the Exercise of the Keys. The true Foundation of Parochial Sessions, &c. The Members that constitute Parochial Sessions.

S E C T. I.

The different Exercise of the Key of Doctrine, which may be by one, from that of Discipline, which requires a Plurality at least of Two or Three.

HAVING, in the former Part of this Treatise, given an Account of the Foundation of the Christian Church; the Character of the Persons, who were impowered to make up its Constitution and Polity; the different Notions and Acceptations, of the Word *Church*, and the Qualifications required in such as were to be its Members; the Persons who were to rule and govern it to the End of Time; and the Subordination of lesser or Presbyterial Churches, to more general Synods or Councils: It only remains to drop a few Things, about the Divine Original of Congregational Elderships and Sessions. What I have formerly said, might be sufficient to let the judicious Considerer see, that even these are founded on the Sacred Oracles, and are warranted from the New Testament.

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ment. But because it hath been once and again hinted, that it would be more then difficult to find in Scripture an exprefs Instance or Example of a Congregational Session; I judg'd it not improper to give a short Account of the Bottom on which these stand. The several Arguments made Use of for establishing the Subordination of lesser Churches, to an Assembly of many such in one Ecclesiastical Judicature, are such as hold good, tho' there were no Evidence of a Presbyterial Church, in any of these planted by the Apostles. Yet I am still of the Opinion, that the Churches planted by them, in several of the remarkable Cities in the *Roman* Empire, were made of more Congregations than one. And were there nothing more but the peculiar Energy of Preaching that was bestowed on the Apostles, and the special Countenance the great Head of the Church vouchsafed on them, in giving us an Example and Pattern of the New Testament Polity and Constitution, it were sufficient, for determining the unprejudiced on this Head. The long Continuance of the Apostle *Paul* in some large and populous Cities, and his numerous Assistants, of it self makes it very clear, that his Success exceeded many Thousands, and those converted by him were much above the Number of one single Congregation, if his peculiar Energy of Preaching, and remarkable Countenance from Heaven be duly adverted unto; and much more it must be so, if the other Things advanced be joyned with these. And the very Nature of Sacred Society, and the visible Body of Christ, as it is represented to us in Holy Writ, will still be a Foundation for the Association of many particular Congregations into one Class or Presbytery, nay, Synod or more General Assembly

bly of its Rulers; seeing the Care of the whole is more to be look'd after, than any particular Part thereof, the Latter being included in the First, but not the First in the Latter.

The Division of this great Body, into particular and smaller Assemblies for publick Worship, was absolutely necessary in the very Nature of the Thing; and the Pastors of the Church have a Warrant to Exercise the Power of Preaching, and dispense the Word and Sacraments singly to any competent Number of Christians; but the Power of Jurisdiction and Government, is no where in Scripture exercised by a single Person, but a Plurality together, and the least Number of these whom Christ has promised to be present with, and Countenance to meet in his Name for this End, is *Two or Three*. Thus the Way in which the Power of Jurisdiction is conveyed unto Ecclesiastick Rulers, and the Manner of its Exercise, is exactly adapted to maintain Unity in the Catholick visible Body of Christ. For tho' the Power of Preaching and Administration of the Sacraments, is so conveyed to Pastors, as they can singly and by themselves dispense these to any competent Number of Christians; yet the Power of the Keys in the Matter of Discipline and Government, cannot be exercised but by a Plurality assembled together in *Christ's Name*. From this it is natural to perceive, that as the Catholick Church is but one great and Sacred Body, in which there are many Members, and all of them required to have a Care one of another, and maintain Order, Decency and Regularity among themselves; so the Power of Jurisdiction, and the Way of its Exercise, is exactly calculate for answering this End. This much serves to let the unprejudiced see, that tho' there is

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an absolute Necessity in the very Nature of the Thing, that the Catholick Body of Christ, while in this militant State, should be divided into smaller Bodies, for the Participation of Gospel Ordinances; and to this End, every Pastor has, by himself, the Power of dispensing Word and Sacraments; yet there is not the like Reason for all Churches, being only Congregational, as if the Power of Jurisdiction was solely restricted to these. For the very Nature of that Power, and the Manner of its Exercise, demonstrates the contrary, when it is compared with the Oneness of the Catholick Church, and the Care that every Branch thereof is to have of another. The not duly adverting to this, seems to be the leading Fallacy of such as fall into the Congregational Way. For if it be duly considered, that the Power of Rule and Government is only restricted from being exercised by one, but no Restriction on the other Hand, as to the Numerousness of any Assembly of Rulers, it is a clear Evidence that the design of the Power of the Keys was for the good of the whole Catholick Church, and a sufficient Warrant for the Officers thereof to assemble in one Body, so far as possibly their Circumstances can allow. But of this more afterwards.

SECT.

S E C T. II.

A Foundation for Parochial Sessions from Mat. 18. 20. which also warrants and authorizeth the Meetings of Church Rulers in Presbyteries, Synods and more large Judicatories, for the Exercise of Discipline and Government in the House of God.

IT must be further observed, That it is a Matter hard and difficult to draw an Argument from the Apostolical Writings, to make it appear that any Church in the New Testament was but one single Congregation, and under the Government of a particular ruling Eldership. The Church of *Cenchrea* mentioned, *Rom. 16. 1.* is the most probable, because of the conceived smallness of the Place; yet the judicious *Hudson* looks upon it as far from being certain. There are some others which have been accounted of that Nature; but how is it possible to conclude so much from any certain and manifest Premises? The utmost that can be inferred from any History we have of these Churches alledged, is but a mere probable Conclusion, and there it must rest. On this Account it was, I have more than once hinted in the former Part of this Treatise, that it would be more than difficult to bring a positive Instance or Example of a Congregational Session, from any Church in the New Testament, denominate from any remarkable City or Town.

But in this I am very far from rejecting such a Court, or believing it to be void of a Divine Warrant; for it is clearly supported by our Lord's Words to his Disciples, *Where Two or Three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst*

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midst of them, Matth. 18. 20. Our Lord in this Text and Context, has a manifest Allusion to the *Jewish* Constitution of Ecclesiastical Government; and as I formerly observed on the preceeding Verses he makes a Gradation, from the lowest Number of Church Officers warranted to assemble in his Name, to the most numerous Synod or Council. This is to be seen at large in Chap. 2d.

That which I particularly take Notice of in this Place, is, That our Lord having, in the preceeding Verses, alluded unto the *Jewish* Polity, and put his Disciples in Mind of what was the stated Order for removing Offences, in the Church in which they were brought up, and which he would have observed in the *New Testament* Times, as a standing Remedy for such Diseases; he, in these Words, gives us a plain positive Encouragement and Institution of all such Ecclesiastical Courts, as were sufficient for maintaining Order, Unity and Regularity in his House in all future Ages. That the *Two or Three* meeting in Christ's Name, are to be understood of such as were to assemble in a judicative Capacity, is manifest from what goes before, *That whatever should be bound on Earth, should be bound in Heaven, and whatever should be loosed on Earth, should be loosed in Heaven, &c.* For our Lord having required the offended Brother, to take one or two more with him, in laying the Crime of the Offender before him, and if he did not hear them, then to bring the Cause unto the Church; he does not leave them barely to gather what was his Will from the Institution of the Old Testament, but gives a positive Encouragement, including in it a real Establishment of an Ecclesiastical Order for removing Offences, and Exercise of Discipline in his Church, to all future Ages of Christianity. By this
he

he gave them to know, what was the lowest Number that could assemble in his Name, and under the covert of his Authority, for answering the Ends of Discipline, and *That was Two or Three*. But to bring this Argument to a clear Light, let the following Particulars be considered. And,

1. To meet in Christ's Name, *ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι*, intimates his Command, and holds forth, that his Office-bearers are to assemble together for the Ends of Discipline, in Consequence of his Authority. Thus, to be baptiz'd *in the Name*, denotes the Authority of him who institute that Ordinance, and gave it a binding Force on Mens Consciences, *Matth. 28. 19*. Therefore, to meet in Christ's Name, says in the strongest Terms, that the Rulers of his House are under the formal Obligation of his Authority to meet for the Exercise of Discipline.

2. It includes, That the Rulers of his House have the Authority of Christ accompanying their Determinations, and ratifying their Deeds, *clave non errante*. Thus, *whatsoever they bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever they loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven*. So, their Meeting in Christ's Name, clearly points forth the Authority and Power of him in whose Name they act, or exercise any Point of Discipline and Jurisdiction. On this Account the Question is put, *Acts 4. 7*. *By what Power, or by what Name have ye done this?* And the Apostle Peter tells, That the Healing of the lame Man was in the Name of Christ, and by his Power and Authority, *Acts 3. 16*. And the Apostle Paul exhorts the Rulers of the Church of *Corinth* to gather together *in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his Spirit, and with the Power of the Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one to Satan*, *1 Cor. 5*.

3. It

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3. It includes, That the Rulers of his House are to assemble in the Hope of his Grace and Presence, to support them in their Enterprises, and what they are required to act in the Government of his Church. This much is intimate in his own Words, *John 14. 13. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do.* And therefore,

4. It includes, they are to call on him, for Countenance, Direction and Assistance in their Assemblies, for the Exercise of Discipline, or other Acts of Jurisdiction. It is only in Christ's Name the Father hears us; and, that he may communicate his Aid and Assistance to his Servants in their Assemblies, he requires, That they may call on him in this stated Method and Way, *Matth. 18. 19. & John 14. 13.*

5. It includes their Concord and Agreement in the Thing they are to address him for, and that they regulate their Actions agreeably to his Word, and the Rules he has given for that End and Purpose. This much is pointed out to us in what he immediately lays down, before he gives this encouraging Promise to such as assemble in his Name, *Ver. 19.*

6. It includes their assembling in the Spirit of Christ, so as to be taught by him, without which *no Man can say, Jesus is the Lord,* or are among the Number of his, *1 Cor. 12. 3. Rom. 8. 9.* Thus, the Profane and openly Wicked, who evidently appear to have nothing of his Spirit, nor learned of him, have not Authority to act in his Name, tho' they may pretend to be the only Governors of his House, and that they are Workers together with him.

7. It includes their assembling in the Faith of Christ, and Belief of his Eternal Power and God-head.

head. Those who do not believe this fundamental Point of our holy Religion, have no Title to assemble for the ordering the Affairs of Christ's House. 'Tis only those who believe in his Name, and are perswaded of his adorable and infinite Perfections, that can be said to assemble therein, *John 6. 69. Matth. 16. 16. Acts 8. 37.*

8. It includes their assembling together for the Cause, and advancing the Interest of the Redeemer, and his Kingdom or Church in this World. For this End Baptism was administered to those spoken of, *Acts 19. 5.* and with a View hereunto the Apostle exhorts the *Colossians*, *Col. 3. 17.* These who have not the Advancement of Religion, and the truest Interests of Christ's House in their Eye, when they assemble in a Judicative Capacity, they come much short of meeting in his Name.

From these Particulars, it is easy to perceive what we are to understand by Meeting in the Name of Christ, with respect to Duty on the Part of the Rulers of his House, and even as to the Encouragement and Authority they have for so doing. This is further exprest by his being *in the Midst of them*; which, in very full Terms, denotes, That he will be present with and work in them; act as the supreme Judge, in protecting, supporting and ratifying their Actings, so as to make all Things they are called to determine, tend for the truest Interest of his Church. The Promise includes more than his bare Presence with them; for the Phrase, according to Scripture Stile, carries in it, his protecting of his Servants, making their Determinations issue in the truest Interests of his Church; and so he goes before them as the Supreme Head and Sovereign Judge; whose Authority extends over all. Thus, the Expression, *being among them*,

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is to be understood, *Deut.* 1. 42. & 7. 21. compar'd with *Deut.* 31. 17. This is also his Promise, *Matth.* 28. 20.

Now, from these Premises, we may clearly perceive,

1. That two or three Rulers in a Congregation, meeting in Christ's Name, as has been described, have Warrant, Commission and Appointment to exercise all Acts of Discipline pertaining thereunto, and what may be for the Interest of that Sacred Society. This is an Inference which cannot be rejected, without contradicting the Scope and Words of Christ, in what he delivered unto his Disciples. But then, if it be a Warrant for two or three Rulers in a Congregation to assemble for Acts of Discipline, it is no less so to any other Number of such which may exceed two or three; seeing the Command and Encouragement is made to the lowest Number capable of performing Acts of Discipline; and the Restriction is only laid against a single Person's exercising this Power. Thus, if two or three meeting in Christ's Name, in a Congregation, have his Warrant to exercise Acts of Discipline, it must, of Consequence, follow, that four or five, or any greater Number of Sacred Rulers therein, have the same Warrant and Encouragement; unless we shall contradict our Lord's Scope, and say, it is equally oppos'd to the Will of Christ, that eight or ten should assemble in his Name, for the Exercise of Discipline, as for one Person's taking this Power upon him. But it is evident, that one Person is bound up from performing Acts of Discipline, and Christ's Command and Encouragement is not given to a single Man by himself; whereas, a Multitude or many have a Warrant, and actually have assembled for Acts of Discipline.

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This is manifest from many Instances in the *New Testament*, and particularly the Sentence of Excommunication on the Incestuous Man in the Church of *Corinth* was inflicted by *many*, 2 *Cor.* 2. 6. This is a Demonstration, That a Company of Rulers, above the Number of two or three, have a Warrant to assemble for the Exercise of Discipline; and the *many*, spoken of in the Church of *Corinth*, are expressly called to meet together in the Name of the Lord *Jesus*, for the End just now mentioned, 1 *Cor.* 5. Besides, all the Time the Apostles were together in the Church of *Jerusalem*, both before and after they ordained ordinary and standing Elders in that City, they assembled in one Body in all the Acts of Jurisdiction and Government, which were perform'd by them during their ordinary Residence in that Church. From these and many other Examples, it is a Matter beyond Question, that not only two or three, but many, have Christ's Call to assemble in his Name, and perform Acts of Discipline in a Congregational Session. For this very Deliverance which our Lord made unto his Apostles, as it warranted them to meet in one Body, while together at *Jerusalem*, for Jurisdictional Acts relative to that Church, which consisted of more Congregations than one; so it warranted them to assemble together with the Elders ordained by them, and make up one Judicature or Presbytery. Thus, we find they joyned with the Elders of that Church, and the other Representatives that came up thither, *Acts* 15. which is expressly called by Doctor *Owen*, by the Name of *Synod*. From these Particulars, it is clear, that tho' one Person is not authoriz'd to perform Acts of Discipline in a Congregation; yet there is no Restriction as to the Numerousness of a Congregational

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onal Elderſhip or Seſſion, or of any other ſuperior Court. For, if two or three in a Congregation aſſemble in Chriſt's Name, the Promise and Encouragement is made unto them; and the precise Number of Rulers in any Congregation not being determined, nothing but the Circumſtances of Places, and the Exigencies of Pariſhes can determine that Point: But ſtill our Lords Warrant and Authority holds good, for the moſt numerous Elderſhip to aſſemble for Acts of Diſcipline. If twenty or thirty aſſemble in Chriſt's Name, the Promise and Encouragement is made unto them, no leſs than two or three. This, I humbly conceive, is an incontestable Foundation, and ſure Bottom for Parochial Seſſions, if the Authority and Promise of Chriſt for that End, be not rejected, which will never enter into the Thoughts of the ſincere Chriſtian.

2. From the ſame Premiſes it is no leſs manifeſt, that the Rulers of many Congregations have the ſame Command, Warrant and Encouragement, to aſſemble together in a Preſbytery, that the Rulers of one Congregation have in a Parochial Seſſion. For the Promise and Encouragement is made unto the Rulers of Chriſt's Houſe, meeting in *his Name*, without the ſmalleſt *Innuendo*, that theſe were only to be ſuch as were Members of one ſingle Congregation. If it had been ſaid, that two or three Rulers in a Congregation, or the like, meeting in Chriſt's Name, ſhould have his Countenance and Protection, the Argument for a Congregational Preſbytery alone would have been undeniably ſtrong from this Text; but when there is not the ſmalleſt Degree of Reſtriction this Way, and the Warrant and Encouragement is indefinitely laid down, to ſuch Rulers as meet in *Chriſt's Name*,

Name, it is a Demonstration, That the Pastors and Rulers of many Congregations, assembling in that Name, have all the Warrant and Encouragement from him, to joyn in one Society, and therein perform Acts of Discipline and Jurisdiction for the common Interest of many Parishes represented by them, that the Elders of one Congregation have for their meeting and enacting Things for the Good of one single worshipping Assembly. All the Properties, included in Persons *meeting in Christ's Name*, may be found in the Rulers of many Congregations assembled in one Judicature, as well as in those of one, and, in many Cases, more fully in the Rulers of a Plurality of Congregations, than these of one Parish meeting Sessionally; and consequently, the Promise and Encouragement belong'd unto the former, no less than unto the latter: The Circumstance of Place will never make an Alteration in the Promise, Warrant and Encouragement of Christ, to those his Servants who meet in his Name, tho' their Situation in the World be never so remote one from another, or they of vastly distant Congregations. The Promise is not founded on this Circumstantial Bottom, but on the Rulers of Christ's House their meeting *in his Name*.

3. From the same Premises there is a clear Foundation for Provincial Synods, General Assemblies, or Oecumenick Councils. For the Promise of Christ's being in the *Midst of them*, has no more a Respect to a Congregational or Presbyterial Assembly of Rulers *met in his Name*, than to all these of a Province, Kingdom, or the Christian World, when thus assembled. So that be the Number of Rulers in any Assembly more or fewer, or the Number of Judicatories in any Nation more or less in their Subordination, they are all equally bottom'd on

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the Authority of Christ, and countenanced by his Promise and Divine Encouragement. In a Word, if a National Assembly, Provincial Synod, or Presbytery *meet in Christ's Name*, they have his Authority countenancing them, and Promise to be *in the Midst of them*, no less than the Rulers of one Congregation in a Session. For still it must be observed, that the Promise and Encouragement is made indefinitely, and is founded on an Assembly of Rulers meeting in Christ's Name.

4. From these Premises it is to be noted, That any Assembly of Rulers meeting in Christ's Name, their Determinations and Jurisdictional Actings have an authoritative Power on Persons, and bind them to Obedience. This much is evident from the Import of the Words, *meeting in Christ's Name*, and the Encouragement annexed thereunto.

5. I shall only add, that from the same Premises it is evident, That the Episcopalians have neither the Authority nor Warrant of Christ, when a single Person or Bishop takes upon him to perform Acts of Jurisdiction and Discipline in a whole Diocese. For, as it is without Scripture Precedent, that ever any single Person performed Acts of Discipline or Jurisdiction under the *New Testament Constitution*; so it is expressly contrary to the Design of our Lord's Words, *Where two or three are met together in my Name*. Here is an Encouragement and Warrant for the Assembly of *two or three* for Acts of Discipline and Jurisdiction; but where shall we find it for *One*? It is not to be found in the Apostolical Writings, or, if it be, we desire it may be produced. Thus, if there be no Foundation in the Sacred Oracles, for a single Person's exercising Acts of Government, but the Contrary; how vain a Thing is it for the Episcopalians to plead

plead for a Succession of Bishops in the Apostolical Churches, in order to make good a Succession of Power in their Bishops over the Presbyters. If Christ has given neither Warrant nor Encouragement to *one* Man, to exercise the Power of Rule and Government in his Church, singly by himself; it must be an Attempt without his Warrant, to obtrude on the World a Chain of Bishops from the Days of the Apostles as having this Power. This one Consideration is sufficient to let the Unprejudiced Mind see the Vanity of such Pretences, and gives us, at the same Time, a clear View, That it was the Will of the Great Head of the Church, that the Rule and Government of his House, was, in any Case, to be the Deed of a Plurality of Persons. Now, is not this directly opposite to the main *Axiom* of the Episcopalians, that *there can be but One Bishop in One Church*, and to him, alone, belongs the Power of Jurisdiction therein? Nay, does not this Rule of Christ stand in a direct Opposition to the whole of the Episcopal Arguments insisted upon from the Sacred Oracles, and plainly declare, That neither Pope nor Prelate has Warrant nor Encouragement from Christ, or Being from the Word of God. For, if no fewer than two or three have Christ's Commission to assemble for Acts of Government; how vain a Thing is it to pretend, That *Timothy* and *Titus*, or others insisted upon, had a Power directly in Opposition to our Lord's Will and exprefs Words delivered unto his Apostles?

But now, when we are on this Head, I judge it will not be ungrateful, to subjoyn a few Passages from a Learned and valuable Member of the Church of *England*, I mean, the Author of the *Critical History* of that Kingdom; which are very full to our present Purpose, and may be of some

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Use to those who have not had Occasion to peruse that Treatise. He tells us, That the *Jure Divino* Men among them, can talk and write with as much Confidence of the Chain of their Succession from the Days of the Apostles, as if preserved as entire as that of the Sacred Genealogy in the first Chapter of *Matthew*. Thus, saith he, * in a *Metaphorical Sense*, *St. Paul begat Linus, Pope Linus begat Pope Cletus, and, a Hundred Years after, Pope Soter begat Pope Eleutherius, who begat Damianus and Fugatius, and they, all the English and Welsh Priests, for 15 or 1600 Years, even to this Day, without the least Bastardy or Interruption: So that nothing can be made out plainer than the Divine Right of the Parochial Clergy to the Keys, lineally or collaterally from the Apostle St. Paul.* But observe what he adds, *Whatever great Name the honest English Reader meets with, to give Authority to such Ecclesiastical History, he will take the Liberty to follow Probability and common Sense, and then he will be safe in his Judgment.*

The same Author observes, That the Succession to which the most ignorant of the Parochial Clergy pretend, is derived down to them from very ill Hands, both *Britains* and *Saxons*. For, † says he, *If they claim their Divine Right from Joseph of Arimathea, or from King Lucius, Gildas tells us how the British Bishops and Clergy were corrupted in his Time, in so much that it called down the Divine Vengeance, in the Loss of their Country to the Saxons; and it must have been a very extraordinary Miracle to preserve that Right Divine, among so much Wickedness and Pride.*

He adds, *If they derive it from Austin the Monk, we have seen how it began, and how it continued to*
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* Vol I. Page 59. † Ubi supra, Page 83.

the Norman Invasion; and if the pretended uninterrupted Succession was not too Chimerical to be disputed, one should not value one's self much upon a Title which had passed through so many Abominations. Some of our Episcopalians speak of this insolent Monk, as if he had been a real Saint, and all the Romish Trumpery he brought along with him, as so many beautiful Ornaments and Primitive Rites of the Church; but the * Author just before mentioned can, with the Spirit of a true Protestant, tell the World, *We are now come to a new Conversion of the Inhabitants of the Island from Paganism to Popery; for I am very fearful of calling so much of the Romish Superstition, as Austin the Monk brought hither with him, the Christian Religion.*

But I cannot help thinking, but the Conversion of the Britains was from some where else than Rome; for it is manifest, the British Christians followed the Practice of the Greek or Eastern Churches in most Things; particularly, they kept *Easter* after the Manner of these Churches, and not according to *Victor* Bishop of Rome, and his followers. And so when our Episcopalians talk so much of a Succession, they ought to make it more feasible, by drawing it from such Churches with whom they agreed in Practice.

But before the first Reformation of Britain should want its Bishops and Arch-Bishops, the *Pale* and *Mitre*, they must have Recourse to the *Flamins* and *Arch-Flamins* in the Roman Temples, which, according to the *Jure Divino* Episcopalians, were turned out, and other Christian Converts put in their Room. And thus the Primitive Christians were so destitute of any more authentic Example than the Pageantry of the Pagans, that

* Ubi Sup. Page 67.

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that in an instant they framed the Polity of the Church after a *Heathénish* Model. But the worst of it is, that Bishop *Godwin* * says, *There is no Thing more absurd in History, than the Imagination of filling the Sees of Arch-Bishops and Bishops, according to the Place and Number of the Flamins and Arch-Flamins of the Pagans.* Besides, he further tells us, that it cannot be made appear from any ancient History, that ever there was any such Office among the Gentiles, as Arch-Flamins. Thus, our *Jure Divino* Episcopalians in *Great Britain*, (for now these in the Northern Climate have taken Sanctuary under the Wings of those in the South) may see how much their Succession is despised by the Learned Members of their own Church. And indeed it is no wonder that the solid and truly reformed Part of that Body are ashamed of such Advances and Romantick Pretensions, so disparaging to the Sacred Oracles. The Men of Candor among them, who pay a due Regard to reformed Principles, very well know, there can be no such Thing as a Chain of Succession from the Days of the Apostles, without Bastardy or Interruption; and that in *Henry VIII's* Reign, the Bishops took out Commissions, by which they acknowledged, “ That all Jurisdictions, Civil or Ecclesiastical, “ flowed from the King, and that they only exercised it at the King's Courtesie; and as they “ had their Bishopricks of his Bounty, so they were “ ready to deliver them up unto him, when he “ should think fit to call for them.”

I shall only add on this Head, a remarkable Passage † from the Parliament of *England*, Anno 1395. “ Our usual Priesthood, which took his “ Original at *Rome*, and is found to be a Power “ higher

* *Ubi Sup.* Page 58. † *Fox.* Vol. 1. Page 662.

“ higher than Angels, is not that Priesthood
 “ which Christ ordained unto his Disciples. The
 “ *Romish* Priesthood is done with Signs and Pon-
 “ tifical Rites and Ceremonies, and Benedictions
 “ of no Force and Effect, neither having any
 “ Ground in Scripture. For as much as the Bi-
 “ shop’s Ordinal, and the New Testament does
 “ nothing at all agree, neither do we see that the
 “ Holy Ghost doth give any good Gift through
 “ any such Signs or Ceremonies ; because that he,
 “ together with all noble and good Gifts, cannot
 “ consist and be in any Person with deadly Sin.
 “ It is therefore a lamentable and dolorous Moc-
 “ kery unto wise Men, to see the Bishops mock
 “ and play with the Holy Ghost, in giving of their
 “ Orders. Their Character is the Mark of Anti-
 “ christ, brought into Holy Church, to cloke and
 “ colour their Idleness.” But not inclining to en-
 large on Testimonies, we shall proceed, leaving
 the Reader to judge for himself.

S E C T. III.

*The Constituent Members of Parochial Sessions are Mi-
 nisters of the Word, Ruling Elders and Deacons.*

AS to the Members that constitute Parochial
 Sessions, they are Ministers of the Word,
 Ruling Elders and Deacons. These appear to have
 been in the Church of *Rome*, as has been already
 evinced from *Rom.* 12. 6, 7, 8. when treating on
 the Constitution of that Church. The Govern-
 ment of the Church is lodg’d in the Hands of the
 Ministry, in a remarkable Manner. And so it is
 worthy of our Notice, that the People are requir-
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ed to submit to them in an eminent Degree, as unto those who have the Rule over them. Thus the Apostle's Exhortation runs, *Heb. 13. 7. Remember them that have the Rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God.* And Verse 17. *Obeys them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves; for they Watch for your Souls, as they that must give an Account.* To the same Purpose the Apostle speaks, *Rom. 15. 27. 1 Cor. 9. 11. Gal. 6. 6. Phil. 2. 29. and 1 Thes. 5. 12. 13.* he says, *But we beseech you, Brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in Love for their Works Sake.* These and the like Scriptures have a Relation to the Ministers of the Word. in a peculiar Manner. To them it was given to ** Preach the Word in Season and out of Season, reprove, rebuke and exhort: To exhort and convince the Gainsayers: To Feed the Flock of God willingly: To pray over the Sick: To rebuke them that Sin, before all, that others also may fear: And to reject a Man that was an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition.* In a Word, they were to ordain others to the Ministry, by the *Imposition of Hands*; and Excommunicate obstinate Offenders, and relax that awful Sentence, on the Signs of real Repentance, *1 Cor. 5. & 2 Cor. 2. 8.* These are the Powers of Ministers of the Word; and the due Consideration of all these Things being lodged in them, it may easily discover to us, That to them the Government of the Church belongs in an eminent Manner.

But besides the Ministry of the Word, it is evident,

* 2 Tim. 2. 2. Tit. 1. 9 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. Acts 20. 28. Jam. 3. 14.
1 Tim. 5. 20. Tit. 3. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 14.

dent, there is an inferior Order of *Elders* which was institute by the Apostles; who were to hold Assemblies with *Pastors* and *Doctors*, for establishing good Order, and the Exercise of Discipline. For as there is an Elder spoken of in Scripture, who *laboured in Word and Doctrine*, and to whom a *double Honour* was due; so there were such as *ruled well* to whom Honour was due, but not in that Degree as to the former, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. Both were Elders, and so had a Concern in Rule and Government, which is included in the very Notion of the Word, according to its received Signification and universal Acceptation, as has been before evinced. But considering the remarkable Subjection that is required in the People unto such as were Ministers of the Word, who by Way of Eminency are said to have Rule over them, 'tis reasonable to think that in concluding any Acts of Jurisdiction or Government in the Church, it ought to be by the Plurality of Ministers, and one would think, even of ruling Elders. Besides, in Matters of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, the Ministerial Office is nearly and particularly concerned, namely, in *Licensing Probationers, Ordination of Ministers, Suspension, Deposition, Excommunication, and the like.* The Pastoral Office is a superior Order to that of mere Ruling Elders, and consequently 'tis most natural to think, That the Body of Ministers, in any Ecclesiastical Judicature, where the special Acts of Jurisdiction are exercised, must at least have an equal Authority with the Elders that are therein; but this is a Case that does not much affect Congregational Elderships, in the most of which there is but one Minister and many Elders, and there Concern is only about ordinary Acts of Discipline. But certain it is, that as both Orders

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Orders have their Share in Discipline and Government; so each of them ought to maintain their mutual Rights, and the one not lord it over the other.

But not to enlarge on this Head, 'tis manifest from the Apostle's Words to *Timothy*, in the Text before mentioned, That the Ruling Elder is of Divine Institution, and the very Nature of the Office makes it of great Use in the Church. There has indeed been much Debate and Strife about this Order of Officers, and by none it has been so much opposed as by the Episcopalians, who have distorted this Text into a Variety of Shapes, but it is fully vindicate by the Authors I have mentioned in the former Chapter, to whom I refer the Reader for further Arguments on this Head. I shall only add, that a fresh Writer, * Doctor *Brett* owns that the Apostle's Words, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. according to their Grammatical and natural Construction, favour the Sense we plead for, if we do not have Recourse unto the Fathers, who, he says, give it a quite other Meaning. And he owns in the same Place, if my Memory rightly serve me, for I have not the Book just now before me, that Arch-bishop *Whitgift* confessed such Elders to have been Rulers in the Church, during the Days of the Apostles, and some Time after. Besides, the Learned Doctor † *Whitaker* and Doctor *Whitby* establish the meaning of the Text we plead for, and distinguish between the Preaching and the mere ruling Elder. Bishop ‖ *Burnet* owns the same Distinction, and alludes to the *Jewish Synagogue* for supporting his Opinion, after the same Manner as Doctor *Whitby* in his Comment on the Text,

* Necess. Trad. Page 92. 93. † Altar. Damasc. Page 631. ‖ Vind. Chur. Scor. Page 304. & Seq.

Text, and he cites Doctor *Lightfoot* as being of the same Sentiment. The Learned *Thorndyke* in *1 Cor.* 12. 28. agrees in every Point to the Gloss we put on that Text, and says, that *These of the Presbyters that preached not, were called here by the Apostle Governments, and the Deacons* ἀντιλήψεις, that is, *Helps or Assistants to the Government of Presbyters*: So that it is not to be translated, *Helps in Governments, but Helps, Governments.* ---- There were two Parts of the Presbyter's Office, in teaching and governing, the one whereof some attended not, even in the Apostles Times.

All I shall further add on this Head, is, That whether we take the Design of the Institution of this Office to be, that the Apostles and Pastors might not be too much diverted from the Ministry of the Word, which the whole Burden of the Discipline, and the particular Inspection into the Manners of the People, would infallibly have done; or to secure the Liberty of the Church from the Tyranny of an usurping Ministry, and maintain the Balance of Ecclesiastical Government, or both, it speaks forth the Necessity of its Continuance; seeing the Grounds on which it is founded, are of a lasting Nature, and render it useful in every State of the Church.

The next Order of Officers that belong to Parochial Sessions, is that of *Deacons*. The first Institution of this Office is narrated *Acts* 6. and it is observable, that tho' the Apostles had the discerning of Spirits; yet, in this Case, they did not make use of that Power, but that they might leave a Pattern of Ecclesiastical Management to future Ages, and shew in what Manner the Officers of Christ's House were to be chosen, they gave Commandment to the *Multitude of the Disciples, to look*
out

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out Seven Men of honest Report, --- whom they [the Apostles] might appoint over this Business. Now, as the Power of Ordination or setting apart the Deacons was in the Apostles, and the Choice of the Persons at their Appointment, in the People, to whom they gave certain Rules and Regulations, which they were to observe; so the Character or Office they were to bear, and to which they were appointed by the Imposition of Hands, was the serving of Tables. By this we are to understand the Care and Inspection of the Poor, and the Distribution of the Elements at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and this we find was their Work in the Days of *Justin Martyr*. Thus the serving of Tables is distinguished from the Ministry of the Word; the Apostles gave themselves wholly to the latter, and because the former was a Let and Hinderance to them therein, they made over that Charge to the Deacons, as their proper Work and Office. It is manifest that the Deacons could not have any other Powers as such, or by virtue of the Commission given to them, than what had a Relation to the external Condition of Men. For as this is all that can possibly be gathered from the End of their Office mentioned by the Apostles; so the inspired *Paul*, when speaking of the different Offices institute in the Church, assigns to each of them their distinct Work, and that which is attribute to the Deacons, is the faithful Management of the Poor's Stock; he that giveth let him do it with Simplicity, *Rom. 12. 8*. Agreeably to this, the same Apostle designs them *Helps*, *1 Cor. 12. 28*. which exactly answers to what was assigned them in their first Institution. And when he gives the Qualification of a Bishop, *1 Tim. 3. 2*. this is one, He must be apt to teach; but

but when he comes to these required in Deacons, there is not one Word of this, but only of such as were requisite to one who had the Trust of the Poor's Stock, Verse 8.

Nor is it of any Weight what is generally objected by the Episcopalians, namely, That *Philip* the Deacon preached the Gospel, *Acts* 21. 8. For, in that Place he is expressly called an Evangelist, and the Sacred Historian, to give an Account of the Person, or who that *Philip* was, he having his Residence at *Cesarea*, and not within the Confines of the Church of *Jerusalem* in which he was ordained a Deacon, he lets us know, he was one of the Seven. Does this say, he was at this Time a mere Deacon, when he was dwelling at *Cesarea*, and expressly called an Evangelist? But considering that Dr. *Whitby* makes it no less than Twenty Years after he was ordain'd a Deacon, before we have him here stiled an Evangelist, who can doubt but he had used the Office well when a Deacon, and thereby purchased to himself a good Degree, that is, says Dr. *Hammond*, was fit to be assumed to a higher Employment, 1 *Tim.* 3. 13.

But when it is considered, that *Philip* preached at *Samaria*, upon the Breaking forth of the Persecution at *Jerusalem*, *Acts* 8. it is not to be doubted, but he was raised to a higher Office by that Time; for it is plain he had not that Power as a Deacon. And they who ascribe this Power to him, as such, must consider, that there can never be a suitable Argument for the Proof of it, from the bare Fact of his Preaching, unless they can make it appear, that this Power was contained in the Commission given to that Order. For the very Possibility of *Philip's* Preaching as an Evangelist,

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and there is more here, is sufficient to destroy any positive Argument alledged for his acting in the present Instance as a Deacon. It is a certain Matter, that the Possibility of his not acting as a Deacon, must stand in a Contradictory Opposition to the Necessity of his acting in that Case as a Deacon; for, if it was possible he acted in preaching as an Evangelist, then that Proposition cannot be true, without involving a Contradiction, namely, that necessarily he acted as a Deacon; because thus he must necessarily have been what he necessarily was not. And therefore there can nothing be inferred from the Example in the present Case, necessarily making it good, that Deacons in the Church are Ministers of the Word and Sacraments. But, not to enlarge on this Head, I leave our Adversaries to seek after a new Argument for establishing the Order of their Deacons, by which it will necessarily appear to be of a Divine Original; and I refer the Reader to the Authors mentioned in the preceeding Chapter for the Divine Right of Ruling Elders, who have, at full Length, vindicate the Office of Deacons, as being only concern'd in the external Conditions of Men, from the various Exceptions that are made against it.

Thus, I have in all Brevity offered what I judge to be the true Foundation of Parochial Sessions, and the different Orders of Officers that constitute these; and I perswade my self, that the enlarging of that Argument from our Lord's Words, will not be unacceptable to any who are Lovers of our present Constitution; seeing thereby, the Substance of this Treatise, and what had been before handled from Scripture at great Length, is brought into a very narrow Compass, and made obvious to the
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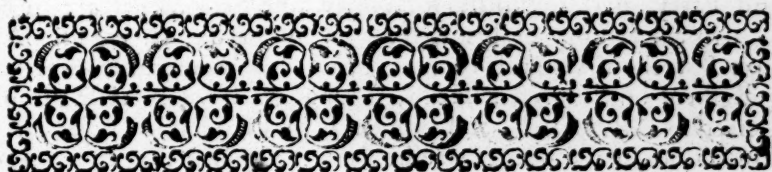
Ordinary Capacity. For, as Christ's Words to his Disciples stand in a direct Opposition to the Episcopal Maxim, namely, that *One* Person or Bishop in a Church has the sole Power of Jurisdiction; so they are a clear Foundation for Parochial Sessions, and all other Ecclesiastical Judicatures, that the Circumstances of any Kingdom may require, and which may tend most for Edification, answerably to the General Rules and Apostolical Precepts; and whether there be more or fewer of these in any Kingdom, they are still supported by the same infallible Word, where it is promised, That Christ will preside in the Midst of such as are gathered together in his Name.

F I N I S.



APPEN-

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APPENDIX.

CONTAINING

A short Account of the Rise of the *Jure Divino* Prelatists, and the several Arguments adduced by them from the sacred Oracles; together with a full Answer to each of these, drawn forth from the Writings of many learned Episcopal Divines, and Members of their own Church, &c.

S E C T. I.

A short Account of the Rise of the Jure Divino Prelatists, &c.



THE different Sentiments of the Episcopalians, as to the Nature of the Episcopal Office, are very wide from, and opposite to one another: For, though all of them, that ever I had Occasion to see, excepting one, agree in this General, namely, *That there can be but one Bishop in one Church*, yet they are very far from being of one Mind, as to the Superiority of Bishops to Presbyters. There was a Set of *Jure Divino* Doctors made an Appearance in the Reign of King James the First in England, and flourished with Power in the Days of his Son Charles, who maintained, That Bishops were an Order or Office superior to Presbyters, and that the Power of Jurisdiction and Ordination was the sole Prerogative of the Episcopate, and what Presbyters had no real Concern in. Among the Chief of these, if not the first, who made any considerable Appearance

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and Party, was Archbishop *Laud*, whose Sentiments are to be seen in the History of his Life, writ by *Heylin*, Page 400. All that I reckon needful to narrate of this memorable Prelate's Judgment on the present Head, is what we have expressed in his Letter to Bishop *Hall*, and which is to be seen in *Russett's* Collections, Page 980. where he says, *No Church was ever planted any where, but the very first Feature of the Body of a Church was with Archbishops, Bishops, Chancellors, Deans, Arch-deacons, Mitres, Copes, Crucifixes, &c.* Again, *You grant*, says Bishop *Laud*, *That the Presbyterian Government may be of use, &c.* Then he adds, *Since they challenge the Presbyterian Faction to be of Christ's Kingdom, as your self expresseth it, we must not use any mincing Terms, but unmask them. Nor shall I ever give Way to hamper our selves, for fear of speaking plain Truth, tho' it be against Amsterdam and Geneva.* — *What you pass by, as not much material in the Question, is, in our Judgment, here, the very Main of the Cause; and it is, Whether Episcopacy be an Order, or Degree? An Order certainly, if it be of Divine and Apostolical Institution, &c.*

In this he was seconded by Bishop *Fuxon*, *Wren*, *Neile*, *Harvet*, and other such Bishops, who were perpetually preaching up, and practising Persecution, doing all they could to make Room for Habits and Ceremonies, and advancing a *Romish* Tyranny in the Church. Bishop *Laud* was so fond of symbolizing with *Rome*, that, as the famous *Whitelock* says, he removed the Communion Table, and set up Altars, contrary to the Ecclesiastical Institutions in King *Edward* the Sixth's and Queen *Elisabeth's* Reigns. He caused superstitious Pictures and Crucifixes to be set up in many Churches, and particularly, caused a Popish Crucifix to be hung up over the Altar in the King's Chapel on every Good Friday, which had not been there before, since the Reign of Queen *Mary*. He assum'd the Title of Pope, and the Stile of *Optimus Maximus*, *Tour sacred Holiness*, *Eternum reverendissime Cancellarie*, & *maximus Pontifex*, given him by the University of *Oxford*. He held the Pope to be Metropolitan Bishop of the World, and chided Bishop *Hall* for calling him *Antichrist*. These are the Principles of that famous Bishop, with many more of the same Nature and Tendency, who may be justly reckon'd the Father of the *jure Divino* Protestants in these Kingdoms, and the Author and grand Promoter of all these unhappy Divisions that have, since his being advanc'd to the See of *Canterbury*, been the Plague of these Lands. See *Critical History of England*, V. 2. P. 133.

But the Puritans and Presbyterians are not without Hope of Success in the Defence of their Cause, while they are supported by Bishops and Doctors, of no less Learning, and much more true Religion, whose Judgment it is, That the Power of Or-
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dination and Jurisdiction is an inherent Privilege and Right belonging to Presbyters, and the restraining them from the Exercise thereof, was only for the sake of Order and Unity. Of this Judgment was Bishop Field, who, among many other Things to our Purpose, has these Words, Book 5. Page 135. — *As another of my Rank cannot have that Jurisdiction within my Church as I have, but if he will have any Thing to do there, he must be inferior in Degree to me; so we read in the Revelation, of the Angel of the Church of Ephesus. 'Tis to be noted, he does not plead for a Superiority of Office, but only that of Degree. Of the same Judgment was the learned Thorndike, Primit. Govern. P. 98. The Power of the Keys belongs to Presbyters, and is convertible with the Power of celebrating the Eucharist; and that is the Reason why it belongeth to them. And Page 128. The Power of the Keys, that is, the whole Power of the Church, whereof that Power is the Root and Source, is common to Bishops and Presbyters. And from what is to be seen in Mr. Baxter's Life, P. 206. and Abridgment, P. 405. Archbishop Usher was of this Mind, and allow'd the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination. To him may be joyn'd Mr. Jos. Mede, P. 26. of his Works. As also Bishop Crofts, Naked Truth, P. 48. and the learned Dr. Whittaker, Con. Dureum, Lib. 9. P. 225. I may here subjoyn Bishop Carleton, Treat. on Jurisd. P. 7. whose Words are these, The Power of Order, by all Writers that I could see, even of the Church of Rome, is understood to be immediately from Christ, given to all Bishops and Priests alike in their Consecration. Of the like Sentiments was Mr. Mason, who, in his Addition to the Defence of the Church of England, says, A Presbyter, as he is a Presbyter, is indued with intrinsical Power and Ability to ordain, and was restrained from the Exercise thereof, only by the Church for Discipline's sake. I take Bishop Burnet to have been of this Mind, when he writ The Vindication of the Church of Scotland, for in P. 331. he says, And I the more willingly incline to believe Presbyters and Bishops to be the several Degrees of the same Office, since the Names Bishops and Presbyters are used for the same Thing in Scripture, and are all promiscuously used by the Writers of the first three Centuries. This is also acknowledged by Dr. Fulk, on Tit. 1. Sect. 2. as likewise by Bishop Brownrig, Baxter's Life Abridg. P. 122. Dr. Henry Fern, Compen. Discour. In a Word, Mr. Baxter, in his Treatise of Episcopacy, P. 114. gives us a large Catalogue, all allowing the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, viz. Bishop Dunnam, Saravia, Bishop Ally, Bishop Pilkenton, Bishop Bridges, Bishop Bilson, Alexander Novel, Grotius, Mr. Chisenbal, Bishop Davenant, Bishop Prideaux, Bishop Andrews, Bishop Bramhall, Dr. Stuart, Bishop Morton, and Chillingworth. To these let us joyn the learned Dr. Forbes, Irenic. Lib. 2. Cap. 11, Ordination by Presbyters alone was valid in the ancient Church; and, by Divine Right,*

they have the same Power to ordain, as to preach and baptize, tho' the Ecclesiastical Laws have restrain'd them. Of the same Judgment was Bishop Jewel, *Defen. Apol. against Harding, Par. 2. Chap. 3.* See also Sermon, *Matth. 9. 37, 38. P. 198.* — To all these we may subjoyn the Bishop of Spalato, *de Repub. Ecclesiast. Cap. 12. P. 474.* Seeing the Apostles gave the Keys equally to all Bishops and Presbyters, — no Man can, by Divine Right, reserve a Part of the Keys to himself, and leave another Part to others, &c.

The Episcopals are no less divided in their Judgments, as to the Nature of their Constitution, and Church OEconomy; some alledging, That 'tis lawful and prudent, and has its Foundation and Being from the civil Authority of the Kingdom. Such think, that no particular Form of Government has a Divine Appointment or Institution; and that every Kingdom, where Christianity is received, has a Power to erect themselves into any Mould of Dominion, that is best suited to the Genius of the People and State. This seems to have been the prevailing Opinion of our Church-men in Scotland before the late happy Revolution. Then their Reasonings for the People's Conformity, made the Episcopal Scheme of Government to be only a prudent Constitution, and not essential to the Being of a Church; and from this they wisely inferred, That they had no solid Ground for Separation. *Sed, —*

Tempora mutantur, & nos mutamur in illis.

The Guise is now changed; and these Gentlemen foresaw, that the Argument would infallibly conclude against themselves, and bring on them the Crime of *Schism*, if they did not comply with the present Establishment; and so to prevent this Inconveniency, and have a Recourse to Conscience for their Non-conformity, Prelatical Power, which was formerly accidental to the Being of a Church, must now be of Divine Authority, and an essential Ingredient in it. But they were not, at that Time, singular in their Opinion; for not a few, if not the greatest Part of their now Mother-Church in England, was of the same Judgment before Bishop Laud's Time, and there is not wanting abundance of these even in our own Day. Of this Judgment was the learned Dr. *Stillingfleet, Irenic. Chap. 8. Part 2.* and he represents, That the most eminent Divines of the Reformation were of that Opinion: And so gives us the Names of a great many in England, *viz. Archbishop Cranmer, Whitgift, Dr. Loe, Mr. Hooker, Mr. Hales, Mr. Chillingworth, &c.* But it is indeed true, that this is most vehemently denied by the Generality of the modern Defenders of Episcopacy in Britain; and nothing, of late Years, has such a Buzz, as the unalterable and divine Institution
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of the Episcopate, and that a Church without a Mitre is no better than a Body without a Soul. But pray, from whence comes all this new Light? and betwen whom does the Charge of Novelty ly? It is not merely between the Presbyterians and Episcopalians, but amongst the learned Doctors themselves. And when the Case is so, with what Candor and Ingenuity can the *Presbyterians* be blamed with it? and where is Charity, that essential Requisite in a Church, when some will even dare to nullify all their Administrations? Let our modern Zealots once reconcile their Notions with these of their own Church, and then they may, with united Force, and better Hopes of Success, attempt to raise a Papal Dignity.

Besides, this is not all; for, even those of the Episcopalians that are so zealous for the Divine Institution of Episcopacy, are as little agreed in their Arguments that are adduced for the establishing of it. And that we may give some View of their contradictory Sentiments on the general Topicks taken from the holy Scriptures, and how they are overturned by those of their own Communion, let us take them in order.

S E C T. II.

The Argument from the Twelve Apostles, and Seventy Disciples, for the Divine Right of Episcopacy, answered.

I. **T**HE Argument much insisted on by some, for the establishing two distinct Orders of Ministers, and giving a Prelatical Power to Bishops over Presbyters, is taken from our Saviour's appointing the *Twelve Apostles*, and afterwards the *Seventy Disciples*. As they establish a paramount Power in the Apostles over the Seventy, so they maintain, That the Bishops succeed to the former, and the Presbyters to the latter. Amongst a great many that embrace this Notion is Bishop Taylor, *Episcopacy asserted*, P. 22, — Dr. Scot, *Christian Life*, Vol. 3. P. 338, &c. Dr. Monro, *Enquiry into the new Opinions*, P. 96. and Mr. Rhind, *Apol.* P. 50, &c. But is this look'd upon as a solid Argument by all the Fraternity? No; Mr. Sage at once overturns it. His Words are these, *Our Martyr Cyprian*, (as appears from his Reasonings on divers Occasions) seems very well to have known, and very distinctly to have observ'd, That the Apostles themselves got not their Commission to be Governors of the Christian Church till after the Resurrection. And no Wonder, for this their Commission is most observably recorded, John 20. 21, 22, 23. No such Thing any
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where recorded concerning the Seventy. Nothing more certain, than that the Commission which is recorded, Luke 10. did constitute them only temporary Missionaries, and that for an Errand which could not possibly be more than temporary. — Presumeable therefore it is, that St. Cyprian did not at all believe, that the Seventy had any Successors, Office-bearers in the Christian Church, seeing it is so observable, that they themselves received no Commission to be Office-bearers. This Argument is also denied by *Saravia, Defens. P. 25.* See P. 12. In that he says, the Seventy were not subject to the Apostles, because they receiv'd their Power immediately from Christ. It will not be taken amiss, to add here the Judgment of the learned Dr. *Stillfleet*, whose Words are these, *Irenic. P. 117, 118.* 'If by Imparity be meant, that the Twelve Apostles had a Superiority of Power and Jurisdiction over the Seventy Disciples, there is not the least Evidence or Foundation in Reason or Scripture for it. For the Seventy did not derive their Power from the Apostles, but immediately from Christ; they enjoyed the same Privileges, were sent upon the same Message, (making Way for Christ's Entertainment in the several Cities they went to) yea, all Things were parallel betwixt them and the Apostles in their Mission, (unless any Difference be made in the Cities they went to, and their Number.) So that there is no Superiority of Office in the Apostles above the Seventy, nor of Power and Jurisdiction over them, their Commission being the same; and it seems most probable, that both their Missions were only temporary, and after this the Seventy remain'd in the Nature of private Disciples, till they were sent abroad by a new Commission after the Resurrection, for the preaching of the Gospel, and planting Churches.' To this I subjoyn that accurate Critick, Dr. *Whitby, Annotat. Luke 10. 1.* 'Whereas some compare the Bishops to the Apostles, the Seventy to the Presbyters of the Church, and thence conclude, that divers Orders in the Ministry were instituted by Christ himself. It must be granted, that the Ancients did believe these two to be divers Orders, and that those of the Seventy were inferior to the Order of the Apostles; and sometimes they make the Comparison here mentioned: But then it must be also granted, that this Comparison will not strictly hold; for the Seventy receive not their Mission as Presbyters do from Bishops, but immediately from the Lord Christ, as well as the Apostles; and, in their first Mission, were plainly sent on the same Errand, and with the same Power.' Besides, this is not all, for the zealous Promoter of Episcopacy, Dr. *Hammond*, note Luke 6. 13. expressly says, 'Our Lord sent out the Seventy, Luke 10. 1. as Heralds before his Face, gave them Power to cure Diseases, V. 9. and so committed to them the same, tho'

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‘ but a temporary Office or Mission, which ceased at their Return to him, V. 17.’ Nay, according to *Hammond, Vol. 4. p. 781.* it was impossible that the Seventy could be Presbyters, and at the same Time inferior to the Apostles; for he lays it down as his Opinion, That our Lord made the Twelve Apostles at first only but Deacons, and sent them forth with a Power to preach and baptize, *Mark 3. 14.* that he advanced them to the Dignity of Priests, when he gave them Power to administer the Lord’s Supper, *Luke 22. 19.* that he promoted them to Bishops at the Time he gave them the Keys, *John 20. 21, 22, 23.* and then after all made them Apostles, when he gave them Commission to go and teach all Nations, *Matth. 28. 19.* This old Popish Argument is also overturned by another Divine of the *English Church*, namely, Mr. *Willet, Synops. Papism. P. 236.* who has these Words in Answer to it. *That not only Bishops, but all faithful Pastors are the Apostles Successors: And that, according to the Pope’s Decrees, not Bishops, but Priests succeed the Apostles; and Deacons, not Presbyters, succeed the Seventy Disciples.* And here, let me add the Reasoning of a fresh Writer, Mr. *Brett, Divine Right Episc. P. 17. Sect. 8.* who seems to have had a great Veneration for the Pope’s Decrees on this Point: His Words are these, *Thus then, we have found three Orders of Ministers in the Christian Church, while Christ was on Earth, that is, Himself the Head and chief Minister and Bishop, then the twelve Apostles, who were next unto him, answering to the Priests or second Order; and then the Seventy Disciples, as an Order below the Apostles, and answering to the Deacons.*

Here we shall subjoyn the Judgment of a learned Jesuit, as to this Argument, and it is this: *Bishops succeed the same Way to the Apostles, as Presbyters do to the Seventy Disciples. But ’tis evident, Presbyters do not properly succeed to the Seventy Disciples, but only by Similitude: For the Seventy Disciples were not Presbyters, nor did they receive any Order or Jurisdiction from Christ.* *Bellarmin. de Pontiff. Lib. 4. Cap. 25.* I hope none will alledge, that this is the Testimony of a Friend to Parity. But to conclude, and sum up this sharp Combat of learned Doctors, the Archbishop of *Spalato*, as he is represented by *Didoclave, Altar. Damascen. P. 132.* has these Words, when translated: *I do not find a Command and general Commission from Christ to the Seventy Disciples; neither can I affirm, that in them there was an immediate and direct Institution of the Presbyterial Office, as there is in the Twelve Apostles a direct and immediate Institution of the Episcopate.* By this it is plain, the learned Prelate look’d upon this Argument as inconclusive, and that it did not prove that for which it was adduced. If it were not too tedious, I might have produced more Testimonies to the same Effect; but I perswade my self, that from what is

said, the unprejudiced Mind will see, who are the Persons charged with Novelty, and how safe the Presbyterians are, while they have so strong a Party on the Episcopalian Side, to undergo the Fate of the first Charge.

S E C T. III.

The Superiority of the Apostles to ordinary Elders, no Argument of the Divine Right of Episcopacy, is acknowledg'd, &c.

II. **B**UT not to be too tedious, another Argument for Episcopacy is taken from the Superiority of the Apostles to ordinary Elders or Presbyters: Such maintain, That the Apostolical Power is transmitted to Bishops *in solidum*, and they succeed to them as such. This Way goes Bishop Hicks, Mr. Lesly, Mr. Rhind, Dr. Scot, Dr. Monro, and many others. Now let us take a View of the intestine War upon this Head. The first I shall bring upon the Field is the zealous Dodwell, who expressly says, in his *Parenes. ad ext.* P. 68. *That the Office of Apostolate ceased with the last Apostle, since there were no Successors appointed of any Apostle, but of Judas only: And so it came to pass, that the Order of Presbyters, from that Time, became the highest, which before had only been the Second in the Church of Jerusalem.* Comp. P. 11, 54, 55, 62. Is not this a surprising Stroke, considering it comes from the Hands of such a Hero as Dodwell? This Argument is also overturned by Bishop Davenant, on *Colos. Ver. 1. Chap. 1.* where he has these Words, when translated, *The Character of an Apostle, according to Scripture Stile, agrees only to those, — who have the immediate Call of God for preaching the Gospel: — who have a certain and infallible Knowledge of the Gospel-doctrine.* And then a little after, in answering Bellarmine's Argument for the Pope's being Peter's Successor, he answers, *We deny that there are Successors to the Apostolical Power, either in Peter, or any of the rest of the Apostles.* He has a great deal more to the same Purpose. Of the same Judgment was the learned Dr. Lightfoot, Vol. 1. P. 787. who says, *The Apostleship was an Order for ever inimitable in the Church.* And before, in P. 545. he says, *The Apostles could not ordain an Apostle by Imposition of Hands, as they could ordain Elders; but they are forced to use a Divine Lot, which was the immediate Hand of Christ imposed on him that was to be ordain'd: That Opinion took little Notice of this Circumstance, that hath placed Bishops in the Place of the Apostles, by a common and successive Ordination.* To these I subjoyn the Judgment of the accurate

curate Dr. Barrow, who says, *Pop. Suprem. P. 78, 79. The Apostles also did govern in an absolute Manner, according to Discretion, as being guided by infallible Assistance, to the which they might on Occasions appeal, and affirm, It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and us.* — Neither did the Apostles pretend to communicate it. They did indeed appoint standing Pastors and Teachers in each Church; they did assume Fellow-labourers, or Assistants, in the Work of Preaching and Governancē; but they did not constitute Apostles, equal to themselves in Authority, Privileges or Gifts; for who knoweth not, (saith St. Austine) that the Principate of the Apostleship was to be preferred before any Episcopacy? And the Bishops (saith Bellarmine) have no Part of the Apostolical Authority. Is there any Presbyterian that could speak more plainly in the Defence of his Cause? But the same Author says yet more fully, *P. 113. The Apostolick Office, as such, was personal and temporary, and therefore, according to its Nature and Design, not successive or communicable to others in perpetual Descendants from them. It was, as such, in all Respects extraordinary, conferred in a special Manner, designed for special Purposes, discharg'd by special Aids, indued with special Privileges, as was needful for the Propagation of Christianity, and founding of Churches. To that Office it was requisite, that the Persons should have an immediate Designation and Commission from God, such as St. Paul doth so often insist upon, for asserting his Title to the Office. These are joyned by the learned Whittaker, De Pontiff. Rom. P. 61. who says, Bellarmine seems to say the Pope succeeded Peter in his Apostleship, — but none can have Apostolical Power but he who is properly and truly an Apostle; for the Power and Office of an Apostle constitute an Apostle. But that the Pope is neither properly nor truly an Apostle, is proved by the Arguments whereby Paul proves his Apostleship, as that he was not called by Men, Gal. 1. 1. The same learned Author, Quest. 2. Cap. 15. says, The Fathers, when they called James Bishop, or Peter, take not the Name of Bishop properly, but they called them Bishops of those Churches wherein they stay'd for a Time.* — 'Tis absurd to say, the Apostles were Bishops, since he that is properly a Bishop cannot be an Apostle; the Bishop being set over one Church, and the Apostles Founders and Overseers of many Churches. It differs little from Madness to say, that Peter, or any other Apostles were Bishops.

This Argument is not admitted by our Countryman Bishop Honieman; for he says, *There can be only a Succession in that Plentitude of ordinary Church Power, which was not to cease to the End of the World.* As he has much more to this Purpose, in his *Survey of Naphthali, Par. 2. P. 191, 195, 196.* so Bishop Hall, a violent Asserter of the Divine Right of Episcopacy, does not admit this Argument, when he says, *The ordinary Power which the Apostles*

poſtles had, they traduced to their Succeſſors. *Episc. by divine Right, Par. 2. P. 200.*

Here I may ſubjoyn the Teſtimony of *Sutlivius*, who maintains, *The ancient Biſhops of Rome ſucceeded Peter in Doctrine and the Chair, yet they ſucceeded him not in his Apoſtleſhip, but the latter in neither.* With a great deal more to the ſame Purpoſe. *De Pontif. Rom. P. 175, 176.* Methinks, here is no mean Party that have given their Voice againſt Apoſtolical Succeſſion, and Biſhops being poſſeſt of that Plenitude of Power that was in them; but I ſhall yet ſubjoyn a Reinforcement, leſt they ſhould take Courage againſt the Number of Seven. Here then comes in to their Aid an experienced Champion, inferior to none of their Fraternity, namely, the learned *Willet*, (*Synop. Popiſm. Controv. 5. P. 232, &c.*) who, in Answer to *Bellarmino*, ſays, — ‘ Every Godly and faithful Biſhop is a Succeſſor to the Apoſtles, we deny it not, and ſo are all Godly and faithful Paſtors and Miniſters: For, in reſpect of their extraordinary Calling, miraculous Gifts and Apoſtleſhip, the Apoſtles have properly no Succeſſors, as Mr. *Benbridge* Martyr ſaith, That he believed no Biſhops to be the Succeſſors of the Apoſtles, for that they be not called as they were, nor have that Grace: That therefore which the Apoſtles were eſpecially appointed unto, is the Thing wherein the Apoſtles were properly ſucceeded; but that was the preaching of the Goſpel, as St. *Paul* ſaith, *He was ſent to preach, not to baptize*, 1 Cor. 1. 17. — The Promise of Succeſſion, we ſee, is in the preaching of the Word, which appertaineth as well to the other Paſtors and Miniſters, as to Biſhops. Again, ſeeing in the Apoſtles Time, *Episcopus* and *Presbyter*, a Biſhop and a Prieſt, were neither in Name nor Office diſtinguiſhed, as Mr. *Lambert* Martyr proveth by that Place of St. *Paul*, *Titus* 1. where the Apoſtle calleth them *Biſhops*, Ver. 7. whom before, Ver. 5. he had named *Presbyters*, *Prieſts* or *Elders*. To this agreeth the Council *Aquiſgranens. C. 8.* *Paul* the Apoſtle doth affirm the Elders or *Presbyters* to be true Prieſts or Paſtors, under the Name of Biſhops; it followeth then, that either the Apoſtles aſſign’d no Succeſſion while they lived, neither appointed their Succeſſors; or that indifferently, all faithful Paſtors and Preachers of the Apoſtolick Faith are the Apoſtles Succeſſors.

To ſupport the Charge of this great Divine, let me add the vigorous Attack of *Spanheim*, *Fil. Diſſert. 3. Numb. 25. 37. 34.* a Friend of Hierarchick Government. ‘ The Apoſtolate was an extraordinary Character, either immediate, or equivalent thereto; it contain’d Infallibility of Doctrine, transcendent Efficacy and Energy in Preaching, admirable Succeſs therein, the Gifts of Tongues, and of working Miracles. All which Things,

‘ Things, altho’ some of them might in some Measure have been in others, were in a more divine and eminent Manner in the Apostles. — Every one who is indued with true and proper Apostolical Power, had, and could give visible Proof, and ocular Demonstration thereof. — Let the Pope now descend from the Capitol, let him, as did the Apostles, declare he has the Gift of Tongues divinely infused, let him bring visibly the Gifts of the Holy Ghost from Heaven; let him work, like the Apostles, such illustrious Miracles, and then we shall yield he has Apostolical Authority. — They are much deceived, who would bring down the Apostles to the Order of particular Bishops; they were not at all called Apostles on the Account they were Bishops, and consequently Apostles and Bishops are quite different Things. ’ To the demolishing of this Argument, I shall here give the helping Hand of a fresh Writer, and zealous Defender of Episcopacy, Mr. Brett, *Divine Right of Episcopacy*, P. 26. Sect. 12. who, tho’ he is hearty in his Suffrage for the Bishops succeeding to the Apostles; yet makes this Concession in the Entry, namely, ‘ But inasmuch as there were some Things peculiar to the Twelve Apostles, which were not communicable to their Successors; such as, to have been from the Beginning Eye-witnesses, and Ministers of the Word, Luke 1. 2. to have heard from the Beginning that which we have seen with our Eyes, 1 John 1. 1. — and also to have been Witnesses of his Resurrection. To which we may add, that particular divine Inspiration which they receiv’d by the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father, — John 14. 26. whereby they were render’d infallible in the Account which they gave of the Life and Actions of Jesus Christ, and in the Doctrines which they delivered to the World by Preaching or Writing: And therefore, their Books contain’d in the *New Testament*, are receiv’d by the Church as the Word of God, being written by the infallible Direction of his Spirit. For these Reasons, and upon the Account of these incomparable Privileges of the first Apostles, these who succeeded them in their Office of governing the Church, humbly abstained from the Name of *Apostles*, and contented themselves with the Name of *Bishops*; which, (as I have before observed) was in the Scripture Language given to the second Order, who were then promiscuously called either *Bishops* or *Presbyters*. ’ If any shall incline to see more to this Purpose, and directly to the overturning this Argument, may consult the learned Dr. *Stillington*, *Irenic. Par.* 2. P. 299, 300, and 301. But, for Brevity’s sake, I forbear to transcribe his Words; especially considering, those who have already spoken will be able to stand their Ground, and abide the Trial of all that shall come to dispute the Point in debate.

S E C T. IV.

No Foundation for the Apostles having had distinct Sees or Provinces allotted them, in which they were to preside.

III. **T**HAT which is much insisted on by the zealous Defenders, and resolute Maintainers of the *jure Divino* Right of Episcopacy, is, That the Apostles had their several Districts assign'd them; or particular Provinces or Bishopricks in which they were to preside. This follows of Consequence from the former Argument, and is maintain'd by Dr. Hammond, Vol. 4. P. 781. and in his Notes upon *Acts* 1. and his Proof is taken from Ver. 25. *That he may take Part of this Ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas by Transgression fell; that he may go to his own Place.* And also, Ver. 26. *And his Bishoprick shall another take.* In this Notion he is countenanced by many others of the Fraternity.

But there is a very hot intestine Dispute on this Head, no less than the former; and by the Attacks made upon it, the Presbyterians are not in much Danger of its Force. Among the many that engage for the overturning of this Work, there are none more noble than these following. And the first I shall bring on the Field, is the learned Dr. Barrow, *Pop. Supr.* P. 82. who cites the Words of *Chrysostom*, with Approbation. 'The Apostles were Rulers ordained by God; Rulers not taking several Nations and Cities, but all of them in common intrusted with the whole World. And P. 113. In *Chrysostom's* Opinion, it was proper to an Apostle, in a certain conspicuous Manner, to impart spiritual Gifts, as St. Peter and St. John did at *Samarita*.--- It was a Privilege of an Apostle, by virtue of his Commission from Christ, to instruct all Nations.----- He had a Warrant and Right to exercise his Function every where.----- His Charge was universal and indefinite. The whole World was his Province. He was not fixed to any one Place, nor could he be excluded from any. To support this learned Doctor, the next I mention is Bishop *Davenant*, in *Colos.* Ver. 1. whose Words are these, when translated. *The Name of Apostle, according to the Style of the holy Scriptures, agrees only to these, — who have not a restricted Power to any particular Church or Place, but that which is extensive and universal: Teach all Nations, Matth. 28. Preach to every Creature, Mark 16. The Apostle Paul had this Power, Acts 9. 15. where he is called, a chosen Vessel, — to bear the Name of God before the Gentiles, — and the Children of Israel.* And

And then he adds, *And every where is called the Doctor, not of this or the other Church, but of the Gentiles.* He has much more to the same Purpose. Again, to support this Charge, we shall give the Judgment of the learned *Whittaker, De Pontif. Q. 2. Cap. 15.* *The Lord committed not to any of the Apostles a particular Church, but he said to them all, Go ye into all the World; and the Apostles, mindful of the Nature of their Legation, did so. — Their fixing in any Station as their proper Sees or Churches, would have crossed their Apostolical Obligation to follow the Spirit's Conduct, which they understood they were bound to do.* He has a great deal more to the same Purpose. Of the same Judgment, as appears, *Bishop Hall* was, *Episc. Div. Right, P. 177.* for when speaking of our Lord's Commission, and of his Promise belonging to the standing Officers of his House, he says, *He was with them, not in the Infallibility of their Judgment, [viz. the Apostles] nor in the Universality of their Charge.* By which it is plain, that tho' he was present with a standing Ministry, and to continue his Countenance with them to the End of Time; yet not as he was with the Apostles, who were infallibly guided, and vested with an universal Jurisdiction. For, says *Hooker, the Apostles peculiar Charge was to publish the Gospel of Christ unto all Nations, and to deliver them his Ordinances received by immediate Revelation from himself. Ecclesiast. Policy, P. 419. L. 5.* This, he says, was a Preheminence, which was not to be succeeded unto by any who came after them, and consequently, they were not restricted to particular Sees, as Bishops were that succeeded them. Let me here subjoyn the Concession of an anonymous Author, and hearty Friend to Episcopacy; but makes a Breach on this Part of their Bulwark. It is also acknowledged, that some Things peculiar to the first Apostles, were extraordinary and temporary, and expired with their Persons: Such as, ——— Their being infallibly guided in their delivering the Doctrine of the Gospel, their unlimited Commission to all the World, and Jurisdiction over all Churches. ——— *Essays on Church Government, P. 18.* Here I shall bring on the Stage the formidable Attack of a fresh Writer, *Dr. Whitby, on Acts 1. 20, 25.* ' Moreover, the other Exposition, viz. That the Portion of the ' Ministry, or Apostleship, which fell to the Lot of Judas, in ' the Distribution of them among the Apostles, and that is called ' the proper Place from which Judas fell by his Sin, and into ' which *Matthias* is here said to go. I say, this Exposition is ' founded upon an eminent Mistake, viz. That the several Pro- ' vinces into which the Apostles were to go for preaching the ' Gospel, were distributed among them before they were filled ' with the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly confuted by *Dr. Stillingfleet.* ——— And when, where, and to what End, should ' a Province of preaching the Gospel after our Lord's Ascension, ' be

' be distributed to him, who was before to be a Son of Perdition ? (2.) To succeed in the Office of Judas, is not to go into his Place, but to take his Place ; according to the Words of the Psalmist, *His Office shall another take.* And Lastly, Had this been intended, a Conjunction copulative should have been put before, and the Words should have been thus, *To take the Share of his Apostleship, and to go into his Place.* Here is such a fresh Breach made by this masterly Attack, that I am of the Mind it will not be for some Time repaired, and made fenceable. But that its Foundations may be razed, let us subjoin the Attack of Dr. *Stillingfleet*, the very learned Bishop of *Worcester*, (*Irenic. Part. 2. C. 6.*) who, on Purpose, lays Siege to Dr. *Hammond*. His Words are these, ' Which Office of Apostleship, (which Judas once had, and Matthias was now chosen into, is called by Peter, *Κληρος Διακονιας και Αποστολης*, *Acts* 1. 25. which a learned Interpreter renders the Portion of his Apostolacy, or the Province which fell to Judas his Lot in the Distribution of them among the Apostles, which, saith he, is called, *δ τοπος δ ιδιος*, in which Matthias did --- go, and from which Judas fell by his Sin. This Exposition is very often suggested by that learned Author ; (but with all due Deference to his Name and Memory) I cannot see any such Evidence either from Scripture or Reason, to enforce any such Exposition of either Phrase, yielding us sufficient Ground to forsake the received Sense of both of them. For *Κληρος Αποστολης* is plainly nothing else, but the Office of Apostleship which belong'd unto Judas, without any Relation to a Province ; and *δ τοπος δ ιδιος*, is the proper Place which belonged to Judas, as he is called, *The Son of Perdition*, and no other. But the very Foundation of this Mistake is, That the several Provinces into which the Apostles were to go for preaching the Gospel, were distributed among them before they were filled with the Holy Ghost, which is an Hypothesis will not easily be granted by any one, that doth but impartially consider these Things, That if the Provinces were so distributed among them, it must either be before the Death of Christ, or after ; and it must be before, if Judas had a particular Province assigned to him, which this Exposition necessarily implies : But how Provinces could be divided among them before they had their Commission given them to preach to all Nations, is somewhat hard to understand. It must be then immediately after Christ had bid them *preach to every Creature*, that they thus distributed the Provinces among them. But several Things makes this very improbable. (1.) The gross Mistakes of the Apostles concerning the very Nature of Christ's Kingdom, which we read, *Acts* 1. 6. when they joyntly asked Christ,

Christ, Lord, wilt thou at this Time restore the Kingdom to Israel?—
 (2.) It appears very improbable any such Divisions of Provinces should be made then, when they were commanded to stay at *Jerusalem*, and not to stir thence, till the Promise of the Spirit was fulfilled upon them, *Luke 24. 49.* (3.) If such a Distribution of Provinces had been made so early among the Apostles, how comes it to pass, that after they were indued with the Holy Ghost, they did not every one betake himself to his several Province? There could have been then no Excuse or Plea made for their Stay any longer at *Jerusalem*, after the Promise of the Spirit was fulfilled upon them. ---- (4.) The Apostles occasionally going to Places as they did, argues there was no such set Division of Provinces among them. The first Departure of any of the Apostles from *Jerusalem*, was that of *Peter* and *John*, who were sent by common Order of the Apostles to *Samaria*, after they had heard, that by *Philip's* Preaching they had received the Word of God, *Acts 8. 14.* ---- (5.) That Provinces were not divided, appears, because of so frequent reading of many of the Apostles being together in one Place. ---- (6.) It seems evident, that they divided not the World into Provinces among themselves, because they were so long before they thought it their Duty to preach unto the *Gentiles*. ---- (7.) Another Evidence ---- is, That *Peter's* Province so much spoken of, viz. That of the Circumcision, fell not to his Share till near 20 Years after this Time we now speak of, upon the Agreement between *Paul* and *Peter* at *Jerusalem*, *Gal. 2. 7, 8.* If Provinces had been so soon divided, how comes the Apostleship of the Circumcision to be now at last attributed to *Peter*? And if it was, how came *Paul* and he now to agree about the dividing Provinces? (8.) The Provinces after all this Time were not so divided, as to exclude one from another's Province, which is necessary for a Distribution of them; much less were they so at first: For, as to this Division of the *Jews* and *Gentiles* between *Paul* and *Peter*, it cannot be understood exclusive of others; for what Work then had the rest of the Apostles to do? Neither, take them distributively, was *Paul* excluded from preaching to the *Jews*, or *Peter* to the *Gentiles*. We see *Paul* was at first chosen to be a Vessel to bear Christ's Name before the *Gentiles* and *Kings*, and the Children of *Israel*. We see hereby he was appointed an Apostle to the *Jews*, as to the *Gentiles*: And accordingly we find him presently preaching Christ in the Synagogues, and confounding the *Jews*. So in all Places where *Paul* came, he first preached to the *Jews* in the Synagogues; and when they would not, then he turned to the *Gentiles*. ---- Neither did *Peter* think himself excluded from the *Gentiles*: He was the first that o-
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pen'd the Door of Faith to them, by preaching to them; -----
 and afterwards, in the open Council in *Jerusalem*, he owns
 himself as the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, *Acts* 15. 7. ----- I have
 only set down the Heads of what is advanced by this incompa-
 rable Prelate, lest, by giving him at full Length, it might seem
 too tedious. After all that has been said, that the *Jure Divino*
 Gentlemen may not despise their Adversaries from the Fewness
 of their Number, I shall, for Brevity's sake, refer the Reader
 to the famous *Dodwell, Pavenes. ad Exter. P. 44.*

S E C T. V.

*No Foundation for James having been Bishop of Jerusalem, is
 own'd.*

IV. **T**HERE are few of the *Jure Divino* Episcopalians,
 who fail to make Mention of *James*. being Bishop of
Jerusalem: But however much this is insisted upon, yet there is
 as little Agreement about it, as any of the former Heads already
 discussed. For,

1. Some of them are very positive, this *James* was not the Son
 of *Alpheus*, or any of the Twelve. Of this Mind was *Dr. Scot,*
Christian Life, P. 394. *Bishop Taylor, Episc. assert. P. 16, 70, 71.*
Dr. Hammond, Pref. Epist. Ja. &c. And indeed his presiding in
 the Council of *Jerusalem*, is highly magnified by them, and
 look'd upon as an unanswerable Argument of the great Dignity
 of a Bishop, considering that there were Apostles in the strictest
 Sense there, and made up a Part of that Meeting. But,

2. However fond some are of this Notion, yet it is as much
 opposed by others of the Party, who with no less Zeal contend,
 this *James* was the Son of *Alpheus*, and one of the Twelve. Of
 this Judgment was *Bishop Pearson, Lect in Acta, P. 58.* *Dr. Whitby,*
Pref. Epist. Ja. *Dr. Cave's Life of St. James, Bishop Usher, Pro-*
legm. in Ignatium, C. 16. *Mr. Dodwell, Pavenes. P. 18, &c.*

But then that an Apostle, in the strict Sense, could be confi-
 ned to the Office of a Bishop, is, with no less Judgment and good
 Reason, denied by others of the Party. And indeed, all that I
 have mentioned on the former Head, if they act in a Consistency
 with themselves, must be Adversaries to this Conceit of *James*
 being Bishop of *Jerusalem*. To engage this much Talk of Ar-
 gument, I shall first bring on the Field the Archbishop of *Spa-*
lato, Altar. Damas. P. 105. who says, 'The rest of the Apostles
 removing into Provinces, it was just, that one of that College
 should

should remain at *Jerusalem*, and have Concern of the *Jews*.
 So *James* was diligent in the Place allotted him among the *Hebrew Jews* at *Jerusalem*. --- But their Episcopate, seeing it
 was by immediate Call, and made to shine with the Light of
 distinguishing Gifts; so there is no Ground, wherefore their
 Superiority should belong to those Bishops that should come
 afterwards by the Call of Men. --- The same Author says, *ubi supra*, P. 104. 'To make *Peter* Bishop of any one Place or City,
 is to degrade him from his Apostolical Dignity.' And, say I,
 to make *James* Bishop of the single Church of *Jerusalem*, is to
 degrade him from his Apostolical Dignity. Again, *ubi supra*,
 P. 106. No Apostle, far less *Peter*, ever bound himself to any particu-
 lar Place, so as to be fixed there for Term of Life. Here it is to be
 observed, that this learned Prelate not only declares; that there
 is no Consequence for the paramount Superiority of Bishops,
 from *James's* remaining at *Jerusalem*; but to make him Bishop,
 was to degrade him from his Apostleship. The next I shall bring
 on the Stage, is the remarkable Dr. *Barrow*, *Pope's Suprem.* P. 84.
 who directly strikes against this Conceit: 'For, says he, it is
 not probable that *St. Peter* would assume the Episcopal Chair
 at *Rome*, [or *James*, say I, that of *Jerusalem*] he being little
 capable to reside there, for that other needful Affairs would
 have forced him to leave so great a Church destitute of their
 Pastor. It was needless that he should be a Bishop, for that,
 by virtue of his Apostleship, involving all the Power of inferi-
 or Degrees, he might whenever he was at *Rome*, [or in our
 Case at *Jerusalem*] exercise Episcopal Function and Authority.
 What need a sovereign Prince be made a Justice of the Peace?
 Had he done so, he might have given a bad Example of Non-
 residence; a Practice that would have been ill relished in the
 primitive Church, as we may see by several Canons interdict-
 ing Offences of kin to it (it being then not so known, as no-
 minally to be censured) and culpable upon the same Ground,
 and the Fathers condemning Practices approaching to it.
 Again, P. 120, 121. he says, 'The Office of an Apostle and of
 a Bishop, are not in their Nature well consistent: For the A-
 postleship is an extraordinary Office, charged with the Instruc-
 tion and Government of the whole World. --- Episcopacy
 is an ordinary standing Charge affixed to one Place. --- Now,
 he that hath such a general Care, can hardly discharge such a
 particular Office; and he that is fixed to so particular an At-
 tendance, can hardly look well to so general a Charge. A Dis-
 paragement to the Apostolical Ministry, for him [*Peter*] to take
 upon him the Bishoprick of *Rome*, as if the King should be-
 come Mayor of *London*, as if the Bishop of *London* should be
 Vicar of *Pancras*.' And a little before, 'St. *Peter's* being
 Bishop

‘ Bishop of Rome, would confound the Offices which God made distinct; for God did appoint first Apostles, then Prophets, then Pastors and Teachers: Wherefore St. Peter, after he was an Apostle, could not well become a Bishop; it would be such an Irregularity, as if a Bishop should be made a Deacon. What this learned Doctor says of Peter, must, in every Respect, be as true with respect to James. But to support this Charge, I shall subjoin the Judgment of Dr. Whittaker, *De Pontif. Q. 2. C. 15.* who says, *The Fathers, when they called James Bishop or Peter, take not the Name of Bishop properly, but they call them Bishops of these Churches wherein they stay’d for a Time, &c.* See this Testimony on a former Head at length.

Here let us bring in the helping Hand of the remarkable Dr. *Willingfleet*, *Ironie. P. 321.* who says, ‘ In Jerusalem, say they, James, the Brother of our Lord, was made Bishop by the Apostles. But whence doth that appear? It is said from *Hegeffus* in *Eusebius*: But what if he say no such Thing? His Words are these, ——— which is there interpreted, *Ecclesia administrationem una cum ceteris Apostolis suscepit.* And no more is hereby meant, but that this James, who is by the Ancients conceived to be only a Disciple before, is now taken into an higher Charge, and invested in a Power of governing the Church, as the Apostles were. His Power, is plain, was the same with those of the Apostles themselves; and who will go about to degrade them so much, as to reduce them to the Office of ordinary Bishops? James, in Probability, did exercise his Apostleship the most at Jerusalem, where, by the Scriptures, we find him resident; and from whence the Church afterwards, because of his not travelling abroad as the other Apostles did, according to the Language of their own Times, fixed the Title of Bishop upon him.’ Again, this Argument was of no Force in the Judgment of the judicious Bishop *Davenant*, in *Colos. Chap. 1. Ver. 1.* when he says, *It is the Duty of an Apostle to preach the Gospel, and that not only in any one particular Church, but every where. — We conclude therefore, that seeing the Pope of Rome is neither immediately called by Christ, neither endued with Gospel Knowledge arising from the immediate and extraordinary Breathings of the Holy Ghost, neither possessed with an universal Power over all Churches, he can in no Reason be called an Apostle, or Apostolical Bishop.* From which, and much more that might be adduced from this remarkable Prelate, it is evident, he had no Thought of Apostles being fixed to any particular Charge, as their See and Province, or James being restricted to that of Jerusalem; but that all of them were universal Ministers of the Christian Church, and that wherever they came, they had Power and Authority. I here beg Leave to give another Attack of the

learned Dr. Whittaker, *ubi supra*, Q. 3. C. 3. 'The Apostles were greater than all Bishops. Both Offices cannot be discharged by one and the same Person: For a Bishop has but one Flock only, which he feeds as his own; but Apostles had no certain Province, nor any certain Church to which they were fixed. Christ did not commit unto every one of the Apostles a certain Church; which he certainly did, if they were Bishops: But he said unto them all, *Go ye into all the World*: And they, mindful of their Commission, did accordingly. It might indeed fall out, that they made a longer Stay in one Place than another; but not as Bishops, because they then would cease from being Apostles, such as they were made by Christ. How could they know they were always to be under the Direction of the Holy Spirit, — if they fixed their Residence in certain particular places?' I might here conclude with the Words of the learned Dr. Lightfoot, who has, by several Arguments, overturned the Vanity of this Conceit, in that he makes it evident to a Demonstration, That the Apostolate was an Order wholly inimitable in the Gospel Church, and that an Apostle could not be made an ordinary or standing Officer, *Vol. I. P. 187.* and frequently elsewhere. But because the Testimonies adduced on the former Head are all evasive of this, and plainly declare against James being fixed Bishop in *Jerusalem*, I shall proceed.

S E C T. VI.

No Reason to conclude Epaphroditus his being Bishop of Philippi, is owned.

V. **T**HERE is another Proof adduced by the *jure Divino* Doctors, and it is taken from *Epaphroditus*, whom, they say, was Bishop of *Philippi*; and for this Reason, because he is called their Apostle, *Phil. 2. 25.* Among those who are fond of this Notion, there is Dr. Scot, *Christian Life*, P. 597. Dr. Nichol's Defence, P. 238. Dr. Hammond, on *Phil. 2. 25.* wish many others.

But however zealous these Doctors are, in finding out Proofs for their beloved Hierarchy, from the sacred Oracles; yet there are not wanting others among them, and even the more true Sons of the Reformation, that are more than able to encounter them with Reason and Argument, tho' they may come far short in a blustering Zeal, and uncharitable Way of judging. Among the first that I shall bring on the Field for overturning this Part

of the Fortification, is the learned *Grotius*, on *Philip. 2. 25.* who says, ' That the Word *Apostle* is taken largely for those who were ' Collectors, and Bearers of Alms and Contributions; and so ' can be of no Service for the establishing *Epaphroditus* Bishop of ' *Philippi*. Nay, Dr. *Whitby* ingenuously owns, *St. Paul's* Words don't prove he was there Bishop. And as for what that learned Doctor builds his Opinion upon, namely, the Testimony of *Theodoret*, *Chrysostom*, and *Theophylact*, it is, but a very uncertain foundation; for none of them call him Bishop, except *Theodoret*. But what is most surprising, this Argument is overturned by Dr. *Hammond* himself; for, however express he is in making *Epaphroditus* Bishop of *Philippi*, on *Philip. 2. 25.* yet, when he is commenting on the first Verse of that Epistle, he says, — ' But there ' is no need of such Answers as these to avoid the Force of this ' Argument. That which hath been said, --- will give a clear ' Account of it, that *Philippi* being a Metropolis, under which ' were many other Churches, which had each of them a Bishop; ' all those Bishops are here meant by *ἐπίσκοποι* in the Plural, ' as this Epistle was written to all these Churches or Cities, and ' not only to that of *Philippi*. ' This Conceit is expressly contradicted by Dr. *Whitby* on the Place. Again, it is directly opposed by Dr. *Maurice*, when he says, *Defence of Diocef. Epif. P. 27.* *I could never find Reason to believe them [the Bishops of Philippi] any other than Presbyters.* ----- Moreover, *Hammond's* Notion is effectually baffled by Mr. *Clarkson*, in his *Prim. Epif. P. 7.* But there has none made a more formal Attack on the Doctor's Notion, than the ingenuous Dr. *Stillingfleet*, *Irenic. P. 359. &c.* But, for Brevity's sake, I forbear to set down his Words.

But after all, *Epaphroditus* could not be Bishop of *Philippi*, in the Judgment of Bishop *Burnet*, seeing he says, *Vindication of the Church of Scotland, P. 310.* see also *P. 322.* ' As for the Notion ' of the distinct Offices of Bishops and Presbyters, I confess, it is ' not so clear to me; and therefore, since I look upon the Sacramental Actions as the highest of sacred Performances, I cannot ' but acknowledge, these who are impowered for them, must be ' of the highest Office of the Church. So I do not alledge a ' Bishop to be a distinct Office from a Presbyter; but a different ' Degree in the same Office, to whom, for Order and Unity's ' sake, the chief Care and Inspection of Ecclesiastical Affairs ' ought to be referred, and who shou'd have Authority to curb ' the Insolencies of some factious and turbulent Spirits. ' Again, let us see how this Notion of *Epaphroditus* being Bishop of *Philippi*, in the modern Sense, will agree with the Judgment of the learned Dr. *Whittaker*. His Words are these, when translated, *Praelect. contra Bellarm. Controv. 2. P. 284.* ' From this Place, [*1 Tim. 4. 14.*] we understand, that Hands were laid on *Timothy* by the ' Presbyters,

Presbyters, who, at that Time, governed the Church by common Council. But they [the Jesuits] will not allow Presbyters to have the Power of Ordination, but only Bishops: For, by the Name of *Presbyter*, (says *Bellarmino*) the Apostle understands the College of Bishops. — And he proves that from *Crisostom*, *Theophylact*, and *Oecumenius*, who explain that Place after this Manner. — To this the Doctor answers, I confess, that of old there was no Difference between the Words *Presbyter* and *Bishop*: There was therefore no Need of these Testimonies to prove it. But if these Presbyters which were of old, and by which *Timothy* was ordain'd, were such Bishops as are now in the Church of *Rome*, then there were more Bishops in one City and one Church than one, which is contrary to our Adversaries Constitution and Custom. This is evident from *Acts* 20. 17. — And, say I, from *Philip*. 1.

1. Here, let us take the Sentiments of *Causabon*, *Exercit.* 14. P. 313. who says on the Place of Debate, 'That, according to the common Usage of the *Greeks*, these Men were called *Apostles*, who were sent on Design to manage Affairs with any Person, — so it is taken, *John* 13. 16. — And so the Apostle, writing to the *Philippians*, calls *Epaphroditus* their Apostle, *Philip*. 2. 25. as one sent to him from them who might minister to him.

Besides, the Vanity of this Conceit is sufficiently exposed by *Mr. Dodwell*, in his *Dissert.* *Cypr.* P. 123. and in his *Parenes. ad Frat. exter.* P. 138. I shall only add, That the learned, and justly admired, the Author of the *Constitution, Discipline, &c. of the Primitive Church*, had no Thought of *Epaphroditus* being Bishop of *Philippi*, when, P. 65, 66. he maintains, That, according to the Apostolical Institution, there were more Bishops in that Church than one. His Words are, *Hence we read in sacred Writ, of several Bishops in one particular Church, as the Bishops of Ephesus, and Philippi, &c.* Tho' that remarkable Author makes one Bishop, and one Church, to be the Stile of the Ancients; yet he expressly declares, that this was not the Stile of the Apostles, nor the Constitution authorised by them, as the Place referred unto will more fully evince.

SECTION VII.

That Timothy and Titus were not fixed Bishops in Ephesus and Crete, but Evangelists, is owned.

VI. **T**HE chief Plea and Argument of the Episcopalians, is taken from *Timothy* and *Titus*. But however much this is boasted of by some, as a conclusive Proof for a Diocesan Form of Church Government, and superior Power of Bishops to that of Presbyters; yet there is nothing adduced by them that is more violently opposed by others of them, and in which they are more egregiously divided. For some of them pretend, That the Apostle, in his Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, uses the Terms *Bishop* and *Presbyter* promiscuously, only to express such Officers as are now called *Presbyters*. Of this Opinion I take Bishop Hoadly to be, Dr. Whitby, Mr. Dodwell, and many others might be named.

But how contradictory to this is the Judgment of Bishop Pearson, *Vindicia. Lib. 2. Cap. 13.* Bishop Taylor, *Epist. assert. P. 85.* Bishop Burnet, in his *History of the Rights of Princes, Prefac. P. 15.* and P. 4, 5. of the Book; and Dr. Hammond, in a Variety of Places. I say, how contradictory are these Sentiments of those Prelates to this abovenamed? seeing they hold, That all those whom they were to ordain were proper Bishops. Nay, Dr. Hammond's Opinion is, That *Timothy* and *Titus* were Archbishops, and had their Suffragans under them; and with him Bishop Bull seems to agree, when he calls *Timothy* Archbishop, *Serm. on 2 Tim. 4. 13.* And to these I could add others of the same Mind. But then, as Dr. Hammond reckons, that the Apostles ordained no mere Presbyters at the first, but only Bishops, *Annot. on Acts 11. 6, 14.* so Mr. Dodwell, *Parenes. P. 54. P. 13. and P. 192, P. 23.* must certainly contradict him in this, when he maintains; That the Apostles at the first ordained no Bishops, but simple Presbyters only; and that there is no Mention of Episcopal Government in the *New Testament*, and that it was not established till Anno 106. But then, according to both these Doctors, there is one Office in the Church without Scripture Warrant, Presbyters, according to Dr. Hammond, and Bishops, according to Mr. Dodwell. But how will they answer to what is advanced by Bishop Burnet, which equally contradicts them both, *Vindic. of the Church of Scotland, P. 335.* That without Scripture Warrants, no new Office may be instituted? Besides Dr. Hammond's Conceit, against Presbyters not being instituted in the *New Testament*, is opposed with all Freedom by Dr. Maurice, *Defens. P. 27.* and by Bishop Hoadly, *Brief Defence, P. 113.* Is it possible to behold such Wrangling, with-

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out being affected with a Mixture both of Indignation and Compassion? Is it not Matter of Indignation, that Men of Judgment and Learning should have such a Fondness to maintain a Cause that is so precarious, as to drive them into so many Schemes to defend it, and every one of them contradictory to one another? And can it miss to beget Compassion in the Breast of every sincere Christian, that Men of Abilities should bestow so much Time to perplex themselves and others, when their Labours, rightly employ'd, might prove much more useful to the Protestant World.

But that we may give the World a View, how inconclusive all these Schemes and Models are, which are taken from *Timothy* and *Titus*, I shall give some Account of the Minds of the Episcopalians at some Length, who, when adduced, will leave no Room for the *Presbyterians* to be in any Perplexity in the Defence of their Establishment. The first I shall bring on the Stage is the famous *Willet*, *Synops. Papism*. P. 236. 'It is most like, *Timothy* had the Place and Calling of an Evangelist; and the Calling of Evangelists and Bishops, which were Pastors, was divers.' To him let us joyn the learned *Stillingsfleet*, who says, *Irenic*. P. 340. 'Such were the Evangelists, who were sent sometimes into this Country to put the Church in Order there, sometimes into another; but wherever they were, they acted as Evangelists, and not as fixed Officers. And such were *Timothy* and *Titus*, notwithstanding all the Opposition made against it, as will appear to any who will take an impartial Survey of the Arguments on both Sides, &c.' Nay, the Jesuit *Salmeron* is ashamed of this Argument, for he says, *Disput. 1. on 1 Tim.* 'It is doubtful if *Timothy* was Bishop of *Ephesus*; for tho' he preached and ordained some to the Ministry there, it follows not that he was the Bishop of that Place; for *Paul* preached also there above two Years, and absolved the Penitents, and yet he was not Bishop. Add that now and then the Apostle called him away unto himself, and sent him from *Rome* to the *Hebrews* with his Epistle; and in the second Epistle, he commands him to come to him shortly. *Timothy* was also an Evangelist of that Order, *Eph. 4.* — So that *Dorotheus* says in his *Synopsis*, That *Timothy* preached through all *Greece*; but he stay'd at *Ephesus* not to be Bishop, but that, in the constitute Church of *Ephesus*, he might oppose the false Apostles. — It appears therefore, that he was more than a Bishop, altho' for a Time he preached in that City as a Pastor, and ordained some to the Ministry. Hence it is, some calls him Bishop in *Ephesus*.

Having elsewhere given the Judgment of the learned Dr. *Whitby* at some Length, all that I shall transcribe from him at the

Time, is a few Lines of what he says in his Preface to the Epistle to *Titus*, 'First, I assert, That if by saying *Timothy* and *Titus* were Bishops, the one of *Ephesus*, the other of *Crete*, we understand they look upon these Churches or Dioceses as their fixed and peculiar Charge, in which they were to preside for Term of Life, I believe, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were not thus Bishops. See Chap. 1. and 4.

To fortify these who have given their Assault, let me bring in Mr. Le Clerc, in his *Supplement to Dr. Hammond's Annotations on the Epistle to Titus*, P. 530. who says, 'The Testimonies of the Ancients about this Matter, who judge rashly of the Times of the Apostles by their own, and speak of them in the Language of their own Age, are of little Moment. And so do no more prove that *Titus* was the Bishop of the Island of *Crete*, than what Dr. Hammond says, proves him to have been distinguished with the Title of *Archbishop*.' To the same Purpose the forecited Dr. *Whitby* says, 'The great Controversy concerning this and the Epistle to *Timothy*, is, Whether *Timothy* and *Titus* were indeed made Bishops: The one in *Ephesus*, and the Pro-consular *Asia*, the other of *Crete*, and having Authority to make, and jurisdiction over so many Bishops as were in those Precincts? Now, of this Matter, I confess, I can find nothing in any Writer of the first three Centuries, and not any Intimation, that they bore that Name.

The Judgment of the learned *Whittaker* is supporting on this Occasion, as well as in the most of the former, who says, *Controv.* 4. Q. 4. C. 2. P. 374. 'In the Apostles Times there were many Things extraordinary. There was another Form of Government in the Church in the Days of the Apostles, and another now, is acknowledg'd by *Stapleton*: For it was then govern'd by the Apostles, Evangelists, and Prophets, but now only by Pastors and Doctors; the rest are all removed.' From this it may justly be inferred, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were not ordinary Officers, but they being both Evangelists, are not succeeded to by Bishops. And here I cannot but subjoyn the Judgment of *Chrysostom*, whom our Adversaries, I hope, will not reject as an Adversary. His Words, as translated by *Smethymnus*, are these, Paul would not commit the whole Island to one Man, but would have every Man appointed to his Charge and Cure. For so he knew his Labour would be the lighter, and the People that were under him would be governed with the greater Diligence. For the Teacher should not be troubled with the Government of many Churches, but only intend one, and study for to adorn that. The Remark of *Smethymnus* is just, Therefore this was *Titus*'s Work, not to be Bishop of *Crete* himself, but to ordain Elders in every City, which was an Office above that of a Bishop.

But this Fortification is not able to stand; for the remarkable Mr. *Dodwell*. *Parenesis*. Sect. 10. P. 404. attacks it most handsomely, when he says, ' But truly, that the Office of [*Timothy*] was not fixed, but itinerary, many Arguments do evince. It was required of him to abide at *Ephesus*, is testified by the Apostle, *1 Tim.* 1. 3. He was therefore, when thus demanded, an Itinerary. The Work of an Evangelist, *2 Tim.* 4. 5. so many Journeyings with St. *Paul*, and his Name being joyned in common with the Apostle, in the Inscription of the Epistles to the *Thessalonians*, are all of them Arguments for this. Moreover, the Apostle commands *Titus* only to ordain, in *Crete*, Presbyters in every City, *Titus* 1. 5. He says, he was left there, that he might set in Order Things that were wanting. And he was a Companion of the Apostle when he was left. And truly, other Places make it appear, that he was a Companion of St. *Paul*, and therefore was no more restricted to any particular Place than the Apostle himself.' Thus the famous *Dodwell*. And from what has been said from so many learned Episcopalian Doctors, one may consider, how far Bishop *Hall* had lost his Senses, when he saith with such a masterly Air, *Episcop. Divine Right*, Sect 4. P. 2. *That if Episcopal Power of Ordination, and Power of ruling and censuring Presbyters, be not clear in the Apostles Charge to these two Bishops, the one of Crete, and the other of Ephesus, I shall yield the Cause, and confess to want my Senses.*

But then, as our Adversaries are in such a violent Struggle among themselves, as to the Character of the Persons ordained by *Timothy* and *Titus*, some alledging they were mere Presbyters, others Bishops, in the strictest Sense; so let me here give the Determination of some remarkable Divines in their Church, who plainly declare against any such Distinction, or Antiscriptural Separation.

Now, the First I shall Bring on the Stage is the accurate Dr. *Whittaker*, who, when vindicating the Testimony of *Jerom*, gives his Judgment thus, *De Eccles.* Q. 1. C. 3. Sect. 29. ' He, [*Jerom*] said not, that it was decreed by the Apostles, that one Presbyter should be set over the rest; this, he says, was by the Church's Custom, not by the Apostles Decrees, ---- Had the Apostles changed the first Order, and set Bishops over Presbyters, and forbidden the Churches to be governed by the common Council, truly this had been the Lord's Appointment, because proceeding from the Apostles of Christ; unless we shall ascribe to Custom, not to Divine Appointment, what they decreed: But the Apostles being alive, there was nothing changed in that Order; for the Epistle was written when *Paul* was at *Macedonia*. — He has much more to the same Purpose, and says expressly, That the Remedy for preventing of Schism,

Schism, by the setting up one Presbyter over the rest, was worse than the Disease.

To this learned Author, I shall joyn for his Support the great Bishop *Cranmer*, whose Judgment is represented by Dr. *Stillington*, in these Words, *Ironi. P. 393.* 'We see, by the Testimony of him who was chiefly instrumental in our Reformation, that he owned not Episcopacy as a distinct Order from Presbytery, of Divine Right; but only as a prudent Constitution, &c.' With *Cranmer* is joyned a great many other Bishops and Divines of the *English Church*, as is evident from the Place referred to. Of the same Judgment was the famous Bishop *Jewel*, as is evident from his Defence of his Apology against *Harding* the Jesuit, Part 2. Chap. 3. P. 243. where he proves, That *Aerius* could not be counted Heretick, for owning, that Bishop and Presbyter are all one *Jure Divino*: For, after citing *Chrysostom*, *Jerom*, and *Ambrose*, concludes in these Words, *All these, with many more holy Fathers, together with the Apostle St. Paul, for thus saying, must, by Harding's Advice, be held as Hereticks.*

To the Support of these already advanced, let me give you the Judgment of the remarkable Dr. *John Reynolds*, who, without Disparagement, was inferior to none in his Day for Learning. His Sentiments in this Matter are to be seen in *Calderwood's Altar. Damas. P. 204. Editio Anno 1708.* From whence you have the following Account. Dr. *Bancroft*, who was afterwards advanced to the Archbishoprick of *Canterbury*, when preaching at *St. Paul's Cross*, Feb. 9. 1588. told his Auditory, That *Aerius* was condemned of Heresy with the Consent of the universal Church, because he asserted, That by Divine Right there was no Difference between a Bishop and a Presbyter; and that the *Puritans* were condemned by the Church in *Aerius*. That being a Doctrine the Church of *England* was at that Time unacquainted with, and so surprising to the famous Sir *Francis Knolls*, that he writ a Letter to the learned Dr. *Reynolds*, That he might give him his Opinion on that Matter. In Answer to which, the Doctor gave him to know, That even *Bellarmino* the Jesuit, owned the Weakness of *Epiphanius*, in his Answer to the Argument of *Aerius*. Besides, that *Austine* esteemed the Assertion of *Aerius* to be Heretical, merely because he found it so represented by *Epiphanius*, while he himself knew not how far the Name of Heresy was to be extended; which he acknowledgeth, in the Preface to his Treatise of Heresy. But then he shews, That *Austine* himself owned there was no Difference between a Bishop and Presbyter, by Divine Right. He cites also Bishop *Jewel*; who, when *Harding* had asserted the same Thing with Dr. *Bancroft*, alledged against him, *Chrysostom*, *Austine*, *Jerom*, and *Ambrose*. He adds to these from *Medina*, *Theodoret*, *Primasius*, *Sedulius*, and *Theophylact*. And then he him-
self

self brings in the Testimonies of *OEcumenius*, *Anselm*, Archbishop of *Canterbury* on *Titus*; and another *Anselm*, *Gregory*, and *Gratian*. It may be added, says he, That all they who, for these 300 Years, have been industrious in reforming the Church, have thought, that all Pastors, whether called Bishops or Presbyters, have, according to the Word of God, like Power and Authority. And then, as agreeing to this, he mentions the *Waldenses*, *Wickliff*, and his Disciples, *Hust*, and the *Hussites*, *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Brenetius*, *Bullinger*, and *Musculus*, and many Bishops in England, as *Jewel* and *Pilkentoun*; and many Professors in our Academies, as *Dr. Humphreys*, and *Dr. Whitaker*, and other learned Men, as *Bredford*, *Lombert*, and others, whom *Fox* speaks of in his *Acts and Monuments*. And then after all, he gives it as the Opinion of all the reformed Churches. This one Testimony from so learned a Divine as *Reynolds*, is instead of many Thousands; and that he has not advanced any Thing at random, one will see, who shall be pleased to cast his Eye to the Place referred to, and the English Reader, by taking a View of the judicious *Dr. Calamy*, in his *Defence of moderate Non-conformity*, Par. 1. P. 88, 89. To these abovementioned agrees Bishop *Morton*, *Bilson*, *Burnet*, *Dean Novell*, *Dr. Fulk*, which are all mentioned by *Mr. James Owen*, in his *Plea for Scripture Ordination*, P. 115. Of the same Opinion was *Dr. Holland* Professor in Oxford, who says, in Answer to *Mr. Laney's* Question, *An Episcopatus sit Ordo distinctus a Presbyteratu, eoque superior Jure Divino?* i. e. Whether the Episcopate was an Order distinct from the Presbyterate, and superior to it by Divine Appointment? He says, the Affirmative was most false, against the Scriptures, Fathers, the Doctrine of the Church of England; yea, the very Schoolmen themselves, *Lombard*, *Thomas*, *Bonaventure*, &c. see *Jus Divino Minist. Angli*, Par. 2. P. 61. As also, P. 127. P. 146. Where you have a great many more agreeing in their Sentiments with those abovementioned. This was the Opinion also of *Dr. Forbes*, see his *Irrepc.* P. 145, 146, 158, &c. and Bishop *Field*, *Of the Church*, Lib. 3. Cap. 39. where he allows the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, and asserts the Place before mentigned, That Bishop and Presbyter were but one Office and Order. To these I might joyn *Saravia*, *Defens.* P. 284. *Dr. Hooker*, *Polit. of the Church*, Book 7. P. 8. *Grotius*, *De Imper. Serm. Potest.* C. 10, 11. And *Dr. Gauden*, *Hiera. Spist.* P. 262. But, for Brevity's sake, shall not transcribe their Words. Nay, the Identity of Presbyter and Bishop is a Truth so plain from Scripture, that the learned Jesuit *Petavius*, *Dissert. Eccles. de Episc.* P. 22. freely owns it, and says, 'Hitherto it is proved by the Authority of the Ancients, that in the first Times, not only the Names, but the Order of Presbyters and Bishops, did concur in the same Person, so that they were the same Men.' And P. 23. 'If any will diligently weigh all these

these Places of Scripture, he will conclude that is the necessary Consequence of them, and that these that are called Presbyters were the same, &c. And P. 24. I think, that either all, or most of the Presbyters, are so ordain'd, as that they obtained the Degree of both Bishop and Presbyter. — And P. 25. There were many Bishops in one Church, as in that of *Ephesus*. But now, to dismiss this Conceit of *Timothy's* being Bishop of *Ephesus*, &c. I shall give the Judgment of the learned *Willet*, *Synopf. Papist. Contr.* 5. Q. 3. Neither can it be granted by the Words of the Apostle, *Lay Hands suddenly on no Man*, &c. that *Timothy* had this sole Power in himself; for, the Apostle would not give that to him, which he did not take to himself, who associated to him the rest of the Presbyters in ordaining of *Timothy*. — It is question'd, says he, if the Apostle had then constituted *Timothy* Bishop there [*Ephesus*:] For, he saith, *That thou mightest charge some that they teach no other Doctrine*, &c. I conclude with the Judgment of the accurate *Dr. Barrow*, *Pope's Suprem.* P. 82. whose Words must certainly contradict this Notion concerning *Timothy's* Episcopate; for he says, 'Episcopacy is an ordinary standing Charge, affixed to one standing Place, and requiring a special Attendance there; Bishops being Pastors, who, as *St. Chrysostom* says, do sit, and are employ'd in one Place. Now, he that hath such a general Charge, can hardly discharge such a particular Office, and he that is fixed to a particular Attendance, can hardly look after so general a Charge.' Tho' this is spoken with respect to the Apostles; yet it will equally hold with respect to *Timothy* and *Titus*. I think, by this Time, this strong Bulwark has almost lost its beautiful Shapes, and formidable Figures, and is not capable of doing much Execution. The itinerary Life of the Apostles, according to *Barrow*, is inconsistent with that of a Bishop, and must be so likewise with that of *Timothy* and *Titus*, seeing they were not fixed Residents in any particular Place, as is well observed by *Mr. Dodwell*. And it must conclude against them with equal Force, if *Dr. Brett's* Notion be true, that they were both of the Apostolical Order. *Ubi supra*, P. 23.

S E C T. VIII.

The Angels of the Seven Churches, not Prelates, is owned.

VII. **B**UT that I may come now to the End of this tedious and unhearty Work, there is a seventh Argument for the Divine Right of Episcopacy, which is equally insisted upon

with the former; and that is, The Angels of the Seven Churches of *Asia*. These, they alledge, to have been single Persons, and to have had severally the Inspection of their respective Churches committed to them; and on this Account, are chargeable with what was amiss.

This Argument is adopted by Bishop *Potter*, P. 147, &c. and, with a great deal of Warmth, he saith, 'There is one Thing will put this Matter beyond Dispute, namely, That the Titles of *Angels* and *Stars*, are constantly applied in this Book of the *Revelation* to single Men. — There is not one Example, where these Titles are given to any Society or Number of Men. — With this Doctor, we may joyn Dr. *Scot*, *Christian Life*, P. 421. Dr. *Monro*, *Scrip. Plead.* P. 117, &c. Mr. *Rhind*, and many others.

But are all the Advocates for Episcopacy agreed about this Proof? by no Means. For, in the Entry, I shall give you the Judgment of the learned Mr. *Joseph Mede*, whose Skill in this Book is not to be despised, nor his Episcopal Disposition to be question'd. He says, on *Rev.* 9. 14. 'That by a Metonymy, not unusual in this Book, Angels are put for the Nations over which they were to preside. This appears, because the Angels which are ordered to be loosed, are presently Armies of Horsemen.' This, at once, contradicts the Assertion of Bishop *Potter*. I shall, for the supporting this Charge, subjoyn the Judgment of the learned Dr. *Reynold's*, who says, *Censura Lib. Apoc. Praelect.* 64. *Wherefore, seeing it is common for all the Angels to stand before the Throne of God; it seems, by the Name of the Seven Angels, all the Angels of God are design'd. So by the Number of Seven all are frequently to be understood; at least, it denotes an indefinite Number by a finite. Seven Pillars, Prov. 9. Seven Pastors, Matth. 5. Seven Eyes, Zech. 3. But especially in these Apocalyptick Mysteries, Seven Candlesticks, Seven Lamps, Seven Vials, Seven Plagues.* These two Doctors, *Mede* and *Reynolds*, may be a sufficient Match for *Potter*. Nay, this could never be a conclusive Argument in the Opinion of Bishop *Field*, *Of the Church*, Book 5. P. 26. For, without expressing any Dislike, he quotes a Passage from the Treatise, *De Sept. Grad.* But among *Jerom's* Works, *Tom.* 4. P. 55. in which the Deacons are said to be the seven Angels of the seven Churches. Besides, it cannot be good, nor the Angels proper Bishops, in the Judgment of the famous *Dodwell*, who dates the Commencement of Episcopacy after the Death of St. *John*, and in the Year 106. Besides, Mr. *Dodwell*, tho' he insinuates in his Book of the *one Priesthood, one Altar*, That the Bishops are here represented in a mystical Way, and personated by the Name of *Angels*; yet even there he asserts, That the whole Churches of the *Lydian* or *Proconsular Asia*, are to be understood by the mystical Representation

tion in the *Apocalypse*; and that the Reason why St. *John* confin'd his Number to Seven, is, Not that by any Geographical Distinction, those Seven Cities were incorporated into a Body more than others of that Province, but he had a particular Regard to the Number of the Angels of the Presence. But as this is mystical enough, and says so much, that it is not easy to conceive how these Angels could denote single Persons; so he is no where more to be reckon'd so, than in what he says, when treating of those Angels, in his *Paranesis*, a Book published 20 Years after the former. And because the representing his Mind concerning these Angels, may be of some Use here, I shall give it you in the following Words, which I have the good Fortune to have translated by a learned and judicious Hand, and so saves me the Trouble of seeking after his Meaning in so mystical a Passage, in the rendering the Place into *English*. This Author having supposed, in the 31 Page of his *Paranesis*. That the Church of *Jerusalem* had, for a Time, some special Prerogatives above any other, and was in use to send forth Itinerants to these that were round about her, and at a Distance. And then, in the 40 Page, he gives his Judgment as follows. ' They [the Angels] were therefore, perhaps, the Legates ' from *Jerusalem*, but subject to the Apostles. The Lord is represented as present in the Midst of them, under the Symbol ' of seven Stars: Just in the same Manner as we see in the ancient ' Coins, the Consecrations of the Emperors are represented sometimes, while they were alive, with Crowns, having seven Rays ' darting out from them; sometimes, after they were dead, with ' just the same of Stars. Thus, the Author of the *Revelation* has ' represented the Consecration of our Lord, according to the Usage of the Roman Emperors. So that the Apocryphical Angels answer to the seven Eyes of the Lord, or Spirits that run ' to and fro through the whole Earth, *Zech. 4. 10.* In both Places ' there are seven Candlesticks; so that it can hardly be doubted, ' that as he has taken other Things from *Daniel*, he has here taken these from this Place of *Zechariab*. So that these Prefects ' of the Churches come not from among them, but were Itinerants sent from *Jerusalem*. For our Lord preached no where ' else but there, nor was his Consecration therefore after his ' Death to be represented any where else, but in the Place where ' he had suffered Death. ' Sure I am, there is not one Word in all this, insinuating, that these Angels were Bishops fixed over these Churches, but the downright contrary; tho' I must own, his Reasoning surpasseth my shallow Capacity. Here, let me give the Judgment of Dr. *Henry More*, who owns, *Exposition of the 7 Epistles to the 7 Churches, P. 29.* — That by Angels, according to the Apocryphick Style, all the Agents under their Presidency are represented or insinuate. All this is so frequent and obvious in the *Apocalypse*,

pocalypse, that none that is versed therein, can anywise doubt of it. Wherefore Christ, in his writing to the Angel of the Church of Ephesus, in this mystical Sense, is his writing to all Bishops, Pastors, and Christians, in the first Apostolical Interval of the Church. There is no Argument for a single Bishop over Presbyters, from the Judgment of this Doctor. But what is yet more surprising, Dr. Hammond, that violent Asserter of Episcopacy, tho' he inclines the Angels to be accounted single Persons; yet he will not alledge, they are characterized there as such, in the Epistles to the seven Churches; but says, *Annot. on Rev. Chap. 1. Ver. 20.* 'Tho' the Angels were single Persons, yet what is said to them, is said not only to their Persons, but to the Universality of the People under them, whose Non-proficiency, or Remission of Degrees of Christian Virtue, especially, their falling off from the Constancy and Courage of their Profession, do deserve (and accordingly are threatned with) the Removal of that Christian Knowledge, that Grace, those Privileges of a Church which had been allowed them, *Chap. 2. Ver. 5.* which is not so properly applicable as a Punishment of the Bishop, as the People under him. And therefore, in the Paraphrase, I have generally changed the singular into the plural Number, by that Means, to have it indifferently to the Bishop of every Church, and the People under him; and yet further, to the other Churches subordinate to each of the Metropolis here named.' This one Stroke of Dr. Hammond's has spoiled all the Argument, and has made it of no Use, especially, if we shall cast our Eye on what he says in the Premonition to the second Epistle of St. John, where he has these Words, ——— 'But here, all the Circumstances of the Text do fully enough concur to make it possible, that John, which was, by St. John the Apostle, made Bishop of the Jewish Christians at Ephesus, should be the Author of these Epistles. Of that John, the ancient Author of the *Constit. L. 7. C. 45.* makes Mention, That as Timothy was made Bishop of Ephesus by St. Paul, (that is, of the Gentile Christians there, by the Apostle of the Gentiles) so ——— John was ordained by John, that is, a second John made Bishop of the Jewish Church there, by John the Apostle of the Circumcision, *Gal. 2. 9.* who planted the Church at Ephesus.' Now, how, ——— after all that has been narrated, could these Angels be look'd upon as single Persons? For I presume, the Epistles were not written to the Circumcision to the Exclusion of the Gentiles, nor to the Gentiles to the Exclusion of the Circumcision.

But to strengthen the Party to the Overthrow of this Battery, which the Episcopalians are more fond of, and universally agreed in than in any other, I here subjoin the Judgment of Dr. Fulk, in Answer to the *Rhemists*, in *Rev. 1. 20.* who expresseth himself thus.

thus, *St. John, by the Angels of the Churches, meaneth not all that should wear on their Heads Mitres, and hold Crozier-staves in their Hands, like dead Idols; but them that are faithful Messengers of God's Word, and utter and declare the same. They are called the Angels of the Churches, because they are God's Messengers. There is nothing here of the paramount Power of Bishops. But to go on,*

The learned *Dr. Lightfoot, Vol. 2. P. 133.* maintains, That the Title of *Angel*, is in Allusion to the Minister of the Synagogue; whose Office was, publickly to read and expound the Prophets unto the People, as the Ministers were to read these Epistles in the publick Congregation. And more fully, and at some Length, we have the Mind of the justly admired *Dr. Stillingfleet, Irenic. P. 289, &c.* 'So likewise it is in the Title of *Angels of the Churches*; if the Name *Angel*, imports no Incongruity, though taken only for the *מְשִׁיחַ* in the Jewish Synagogue, the publick Minister of the Synagogue, called the Angel of the Congregation; What Power can be inferred from thence any more, than such an Officer was invested with? Again, if the *Πρόεδρος*, or President of the Assembly of Presbyters, might be so called; what Superiority can be deduced thence, any more than such an one enjoys? Nay, if in the Prophetical Stile, any Unity may be set down by Way of Representation of a Multitude: What Evidence can be brought from the Name, that by it some one particular Person must be understood? And by this Means, *Timothy* may avoid being charged with *leaving his first Love*, which he must of Necessity be, by those that make him Angel of the Church of *Ephesus*, at the Time of writing his Epistles. Neither is it any way salved by the Answer given, that the Name *Angel* is Representative of the whole Church, and so there is no Necessity the Angel should be personally guilty of it. For, *First*, It seems strange, that the whole diffusive Body should be charg'd with a Crime by the Name of *Angel*, and he that is particularly meant by that Name should be free from it. As if a Prince should charge the Mayor of a Corporation as guilty of a Rebellion, and by it only mean that the Corporation was guilty, but the Mayor was innocent himself. *Secondly*. If many Things in the Epistles be direct to the Angels, but yet so as to concern the whole Body, then of Necessity the Angel must be taken as a Representative of the whole Body; and then, why may not the Word *Angel* be taken by Way of Representation of the Body it self, either of the whole Church, or, which is far more probable, of the *Confessus*, or Order of Presbyters in that Church? We see, what miserable unaccountable Arguments those are, which are brought for any Kind of Government from metaphorical or ambiguous Expressions, or Names promiscuously used.

Besides;

Besides, if *Austin* be not rejected as being *Presbyterian*, the second of the Homilies ascribed to him, in *Apocalypse*, says, *That under the Name of Angel, not only Bishops, but other Church Rulers, are understood.* — For, seeing *Angel* signifies *Messenger*, who-soever, whether *Bishop*, *Presbyter*, or *Laick*, frequently speaking of God, and declares how we may obtain eternal Life, deservedly gets the Name of an Angel of God. To this ancient *Episcopalian* we may joyn the Judgment of *Aretas*, in his *Comment.* on the 3d Chapter of the *Revelation*, where he has these Words, when rendred, *The Angel of Ephesus is the Church it self.* And to the former two, let me give the Opinion of *Primasius*, who says on the first Chap. *By these Angels of the Church, we are to understand the Guides and Rectors of the whole People, who ruling in particular Churches, preach the Word of Life to all Men: For the Name Angel signifies a Messenger.* — And in the 2d Chapter he says, *Both Church and Angel is comprised under the Person of the Angel.* And, as agreeing with these, Mr. Fox gives us the Judgment of *Gregory the Great*, *Lib. 34. Moral. on Job Chap. 4.* *Frequently the Preachers of the holy Scriptures, in as much as they proclaim the Glory of the Father, they are designed by the Name of Angels: Hence it is, that John in the Revelation, when writing to the Seven Churches, he says, the Angels of the Churches, that is, to the Minister of the People.*

To these, Mr. Fox subjoyns the Judgment of *Thomas*, *Beda*, *Richard*, &c. as all agreeing with these above named. Nay, this was an Argument that could never be of any Weight with the learned *George Cassander*, for he says, *Consult. Art. 14.* *If Episcopacy be an Order, Divines and Canonists do not agree: But all agree, that in the Apostles Age, there was no Difference between Bishop and Presbyter; but afterwards, for Order's sake, and that Schism might be found, the Bishop was set over the Presbyters, to whom only the Power of Ordination was committed. It is certain also, that the Presbyterate and the Diaconate are the only sacred Orders, which we read to have been in the primitive Church, which Pope Urban witnesseth, and Chrysostom and Ambrose observ'd on the first Epistle to Timothy, from this, That Paul subjoyns the Ordination of a Deacon immediately to that of a Bishop.*

Now, seeing there were no Bishops distinct from Presbyters in the Apostles Days, the seven Angels could not be such. I here beg Leave to give a further Evidence, of what was the Opinion of the learned Dr. *Reynolds*, which will appear from what he says in his Conference with *Hart* the Jesuit, namely, *That when Elders were ordain'd by the Apostle in every Church, through every City to feed the Flock of Christ, whereof the Holy Ghost had made them Overseers: They, to the Intent they might the better do it by common Counsel and Consent, did use to assemble themselves and meet together.*

In the which Meetings, for the more orderly handling and concluding Things pertaining to their Charge, they chose one among themselves to be the President of their Meeting, and Moderator of their Actions. This much he hath in the Close of the third Division. In the Beginning of the Fifth he says, *And this is he, whom afterwards, in the primitive Church, the Fathers called Bishop.* For, as the Name of Ministers, common to all them who serve Christ in the Stewardship of the Mystery of God, that is, in preaching the Gospel, is now, by the Custom of our English Speech, restrained to Elders who are under a Bishop; so the Name of Bishop, common to all Elders and Pastors of the Church, was then, by the usual Language of the Fathers, appropriated to him who had the Precedency over Elders. Who shall doubt, from what is said, what was the Mind of this learned Antiquarian, concerning the Angel of the Church of Ephesus?

And to conclude this much bragg'd of Argument, it is evident, it could be of no Force with Dr. Forbes, seeing, according to *Zu-ri-ven*, he look'd upon the seven Churches of Asia as Mystical and Prophetical, the Church of Ephesus signifying the primitive Church of the three first Ages, &c. This being an Argument in which the Episcopalians seem to be most agreed, I have been the more full, in giving the Sentiments of their Brethren about it; and could have added many more: But, for Brevity's sake, I satisfy my self with these already adduced.

S E C T. IX.

The Christian Church had its Model from the Jewish Synagogues, and not from the Temple, or the Subordination of Priests and Levites to the High-priest, is owned.

I Have omitted no Proof of the Divine Right of the Episcopate, that is of any Moment, or ordinarily insisted upon, save that which is taken from the Form of the Government of the Jewish Church. And here, I could enumerate a great many Divines of the Episcopal Church, giving their Testimony to the concealing thereof, and burying it for ever in Oblivion. Among these is the learned Dr. *Stillingfleet*, *Irenic. Part 2. P. 239, &c.* who makes it evident, That the Christian Church had its Model from the Synagogue, and by no Means from the Temple. His Words are these, That which we lay then as the Foundation, whereby to clear what Apostolical Practice was, is, That the Apostles, in forming Churches, did observe the Custom of the Jewish Synagogues. *Totum regimen Ecclesiarum Christi conformatum fuit ad Syna-*

Synagogarum exemplar, saith *Grotius* truly, *Presides & Curato-*
res Ecclesiarum, adinstar Presbyterorum Synagoga Judaicæ, con-
stitutos fuisse, constat, as Salmasius often affirms. In which Sense,
 we understand that famous Speech of the Author of the Com-
 mentary on *St. Paul's* Epistles, which goes under the Name of
St. Ambrose, but now judged by most to be done by *Hilary*, a
 Deacon of the Church of *Rome*, under which Name *St. Austin*
 quotes some Words on the 5th to the *Romans*, which are found
 still in these Commentaries. *Nam apud omnes utique Gentes ho-*
norabilis est Senectus; unde & Synagoga, & postea Ecclesia, seniores
habuit, sine quorum consilio nihil agebatur in Ecclesia. Which
 Words are not to be understood of a distinct Sort of Presbyters
 from such as were employ'd in preaching the Word, but of such
 Presbyters as were the common Council of the Church, for the
 moderating and ruling the Affairs of it; which the Church of
 Christ had constituted among them, as the *Jewish* Synagogue
 had before. He has a great deal more on this Head, and then
 adds, P. 265. 'It is a common Mistake to think, that the
 Ministers of the Gospel succeed by way of Correspondency and
 Analogy to the Priests under the Law; which Mistake has
 been the Foundation and Original of many Errors. For when
 in the Primitive Church, the Name of Priests came to be attribu-
 ted to Gospel Ministers, from a fair Compliance (as it was then
 thought) of the Christians only to the Name used both among
 Jews and Gentiles, in Process of Time, Corruptions increasing
 in the Church, these Names that were used by the Christians
 by way of Analogy and Accommodation, brought in the Things
 themselves primarily intended by these Names: So by the me-
 taphorical Names of Priests and Altars, at last came up the Sa-
 crifice of the Mass; without which, they thought the Names
 Priests and Altar were insignificant. This Mistake, we see, runs
 all along through the Writers of the Church, as soon as the
 Name Priests was applied to the Elders of the Church, that
 they derived their Succession from the Priests of Aaron's Order,
 &c.

To this I might show at large, the Judgment of *Willet*, in his
Synops. Papism. Controv. 13. Par. 2. Q. 2. The Acknowledgment
 of *Dr. Hammond*, in *Quer.* 6. P. 349. The clear Determination
 of the ingenious *Dr. Lightfoot*, in his *Harmon.* on *Acts* 6, and 7.
 and frequently elsewhere in his Writings. The Sentiments of
 the incomparable *Selden*, in his *Eutyph.* and *Gemar. Babyl. de Synedr.*
Lib. 2. C. 7. But the Sentiments of so many being represented
 by the laborious *Dr. Stillingfleet*, in the Places above mentioned,
 I wholly forbear to give their Words, which would prove tedi-
 ous. I here also refer the Reader to *Grotius*, *De Imper. Summar.*
Potest. Cap. 11. *Seff.* 8 and P. 355, 356, 357. Here, I shall give

the short and patherick Testimony of the learned *Whittaker*, As there is now no Sacrifice, so neither is there any Priesthood. — *De Pontiff. Q. 1. C. 2.* To him the Sentiments of *Sutlivie* agree, The Old Testament had one Temple, many Sacrifices, Orders of Priests and Levites, sacred Rites and Laws; which Things belong not at all to the New Testament. *De Pontiff. Lib. 1. C. 8.*

Let me here subjoyn the Opinion of Bishop *Burnet*, who says, *Vindic. Chur. Scotl. P. 304, 305.* Let me send you to the Masters of Jewish Learning; particularly to the eminently learned *Dr. Lightfoot*, who will inform you, That in every Synagogue there was one peculiarly charged with the Worship, called the Bishop of the Congregation, the Angel of the Church, or Minister of the Synagogue. And besides him, there were Three who had the Civil Judicature, who were Judges also about the receiving of Profelytes, the Imposition of Hands, &c. and there were other Three who gathered and distributed the Alms. Now, the Christian Religion taking Place, as the Gospel was planted in Cities where it was chiefly preached, these Forms and Orders were retain'd, both in Names and Things. Of the same Judgment was *Grotius*, in his *Annot. on 1 Tim. 5. 17.* To these I might add the Sentiment of Bishop *Bilson*, *Perpet. Govern. Ch. 2. P. 12.* and *Ch. 7.* But the Reader will see his Words in *Mr. Anderson* against *Rbind*, *P. 67.*

Now, to dismiss this Argument, tho' the famous *Mr. Dodswell*, in his *one Priesthood, and one Altar, C. 9.* has found out an High Priesthood, Priests, and Sacrifices, under the Gospel; the ancient Bishops wearing the Sacerdotal Frontel in Imitation of the Jewish High-priest, and their Succession hereditary; yet, in his *Paranesis ad Fratres exteros, P. 14. P. 57.* he freely owns, 'That it is not needful that the Form of Government to be observed [in the Gospel Church] should have been delivered in the Canonical Scriptures; That there is no Place of them which openly profess that; That there is none of the sacred Writers treat of Church Government on Design: Nay, That the Holy Ghost has never describ'd any one Form of Government, that was to take Place every where, and at all Times. Moreover, that the sacred Writers never expressly enough declared what Changes were to fall out in the Government of the Church, when they should depart from the Communion of the Synagogues. — Further, they never fully distinguished the extraordinary Officers, who were to expire in the End of that very Age, from those who were ordinary or standing.' Compare with this *P. 58.* 'The Apostles themselves, do not seem to have known any Thing of the Government of the Church, till their Separation from the Synagogues; they were by Birth Jews, and zealous of the Law and Customs of their Fathers, and if our Lord, before that, had revealed any Thing to them which

‘ which looked that Way, that is, to a Change of Government, ‘ they had been in Hazard of revolting from, instead of abiding ‘ by him.’ Compare with these, P. 54. and it will appear, that he owns, *That the Episcopal Constitution of Government, which now obtains, is latter than all their Writings in the New Testament, and therefore is not to be sought there.* Add to these what he says, P. 184. *It therefore follows, That whatever Imparity afterwards obtain’d, it was owing to the Pactions of the Bishops among themselves, and had all that Right which such Pactions could give it.* To all these, I subjoyn what he has in his Preface to his *One Priesthood*, Sect. 8. *How long Parity (among Bishops) obtain’d, it is hard to determine, so many ancient Monuments being lost. I’m much of the Mind, it prevailed almost till the Time of Constantine.*

But passing a great many more which might be adduced, I cannot miss thinking, from what is already transcribed, the judicious and unprejudiced Mind will be satisfied, That the *Jure Divino* Right of Episcopacy is not so well founded as some would persuade the World to believe; and that however great Noise some furious Bigots of late Years have made; yet they have not been in Concert, while they were amusing the World with the Scripture Foundation of their Church Constitution and Establishment: And that either they have not been acquainted with the Sentiments of their Brethren, or imagin’d there were none of the *Un-churched Presbyterians* durst adventure to look into them. But such Adventures prove often dangerous: And therefore, let them once study to be reconciled among themselves, and adjust their own Principles and intestine Feuds, before they make bold and impudent Charges against those, who desire to make the Laws of Christ the Rule and Measure of their Faith and Practice.

But if they will still persist, they must know, That every religious and true Protestant will regard all their Clamours concerning the *Church*, and uncharitable Charges against them, no more than when his pretended *Holiness*, the *Man of Sin*, as his Custom is once a Year, curses them whom he is pleased to reckon *Hereticks*, with the Solemnity of Bell, Book and Candle. For, if these Men will love Cursing rather than Blessing, this is a sufficient Support to the *Man of God*, That the *Curse causeless shall not come*; and that it is not in the Power of enraged Mortals to distribute these Curses, they would be as fond to inflict, as they are ready to denounce.

S E C T. X.

Presbytery owned from the first Dawning of the Reformation, by many Learned Divines, and others of all Ranks in England.

NOW, to put an End to this Collection, I shall, for the sake of the ordinary Reader, add a Passage or two from the learned and highly to be admired, *The Author of the Critical History of England*, to whom every reformed Briton is under singular Obligations, for the unexpressible Service he hath done both to Church and State.

The First is from P. 9, 10. Vol. II. 'When the Martyr Lambert was question'd concerning his Belief, and the Number of his Fellow-believers, under Archbishop Warham, A. D. 1532. he said, *I shall note to you a great Multitude, which you may know and hear of, I suppose, through all the Regions and Realms of Christendom, that do believe as I believe: The Number, as I conceive, amounting nigh unto one Half of Christendom.* Though that pious Man was probably out of his Calculation, yet most certain it is, That the foreign Protestants of Calvin's Discipline, which Archbishop Laud, Mr. Eachard, and others, call New-fangled, were many Times more in Number than the Protestants of England, who opposed that Discipline. I would give the Arch-deacon an Authority for it, [he means Eachard] against which, I'm satisfy'd, he has nothing to say; my Author being a Papist, and no less a Man than King James II's Ambassador to the Pope, the Earl of Castlemain, who, in his Book against Dr. Loyd, late Bishop of Worcester, has this Passage. Sure, says he, these Men that persecute others, meaning Bishop Selden, Bishop Morley, Bishop Ward, and the rest of Mr. Eachard's admirable Prelates, are beside themselves: For, if they should go about to reckon themselves up, together with all their Adherents, they would find they are not the sixth Part of the reformed People in England.' A second Passage is, from P. 12, 13, 14. 'Nothing in History is surer, than that the Difference of Opinions about Church Government and Church Worship, is as old as the Reformation. This appeared more sensibly, when the two Parties were on neutral Ground, and the Persons on both Sides fled from Q. Mary's Cruelty to Germany. There were about 800 of them in the Empire, Switzerland, France, and Geneva: The most settled at Frankfort; and it was no little Scandal to their holy Religion, that such Divisions should disturb Christian Union, in so difficult and dangerous a
Juncture,

Juncture. One Part of these Fugitives were for *Diocesans*, the
English Liturgy and Ceremonies, for the same Reason that
 they were established in *England*; that they might no more
 than needs depart from the Papists, nor seem inconsistent by
 departing from what King *Edward* had done. The Heads of
 these were Dr. *Elmer*, and Dr. *Cox*. afterwards Bishop of *Lon-*
don and *Ely*. The others were for *Calvin's* Discipline, and Way
 of Worship. The Heads of these were *Whitehead*, *Sampson*,
Humphry, and *Whittingham*: Of these *Whitehead* was in such
 high Esteem with *Q. Elisabeth*, that she offered him the Arch-
 bishoprick of *Canterbury*; but he refused it, as *Sampson* did
 the Bishoprick of *Norwich*. *Laurence Humphry* Dean of *Win-*
chester, was a Man so eminently learned, that it is suppos'd he
 might have attained the highest Dignity in the Church; but
 that in Matters of Ceremony and Indifferency, says *A. Wood*, he
 altogether consented not to the Church of *England*. This great
 Divine was Professor of Divinity, President of *Magdalene-Col-*
lege, and several Times Vice-Chancellor of *Oxford*. *A. Wood* adds,
 He stock'd his Colledge with a Generation of Non-conformists,
 and sow'd Seeds of *Calvinism* in the Divinity School. Archbi-
 shop *Matthew* said of him, He had read more Fathers, than the
Jesuit *Campion*, his Antagonist, ever saw. Dr. *Humphry* was
 wont to say, We ought to refuse to conform to the Enemies of God
 in any of their Ceremonies. He openly professed his Desire and
 Hope of the utter abolishing all Monuments of Popish Supersti-
 tion yet remaining. Dr. *Sampson*, Dean of *Christ's Church*, was
 another Divine of great Eminence, noted for his Conversion of
 the holy Martyr Mr. *Bradford*: He was remov'd from his
 Deanry by Dr. *Parker* Archbishop of *Canterbury*, who had be-
 fore hindred him of the Bishoprick of *Norwich*, on Account of
 his Scruples with respect to Rites and Habits. *Wood the Oxonian*
 says, He was a severe *Calvinist*, if not worse, and lived beyond
 the Age of Men, in a perpetual Motion for carrying on of the
 holy Cause of Purity and Reformation; which are some of the
 great Jest in the World, to such as have no Notion of a Church,
 without Honours, Riches and Powers: And these Jest-makers
 would certainly be very much in the Right, if there were no
 other World but the present, to which they seem to confine
Christ's glorious Kingdom. A great Friend of Dr. *Sampson's*
 was Mr. *Richard Chalmers*, whom Bishop *Ridley* speaks of so
 affectionately in his Letter to Dr. *Grindal*, then a Fugitive with
 them in *Germany*.

Dr. *Novell* Dean of *St. Paul's*, was a Divine of the same reli-
 gious Principles, and a frequent Preacher at Court. *A. Wood*
 tells us, he used to deal plainly and faithfully with Queen *E-*
lisabeth, especially against the Sign of the Cross; at which she
 was

' was so much offended, that she called to him to forbear. The
 ' very eminent Dr. Fulk, Master of *Pembroke-Hall* in *Cambridge*,
 ' says, If a Man mislike our Form of Service, as not differing
 ' sufficiently from yours, the Popish, he sheweth his greatest Zeal
 ' in Detestation of your Idolatry and Blasphemy. Again, We
 ' abhor whatever hath but a Show of Popery. Dr. *Sutliff* was
 ' another learned and pious Divine, who agreed with *Calvin* in
 ' Matters of Faith and Discipline; as did also Dr. *Andrews*, Mr.
 ' *Marburry*, Mr. *Greenham*, Mr. *Perkins*, Mr. *Powell*, famous Cham-
 ' pions for the Protestant Religion, against *Harding*, *Martial*,
 ' *Brislaw*, *Campion*, and other Popish Writers. He adds, P. 15.
 ' There would be no end of it, if one should go about to name
 ' all the eminent Divines and Doctors of our Church, who were
 ' of the same Sentiments, tho' many of them did not think the
 ' Difference between the *Geneva* Reform and that of *England*,
 ' sufficient to warrant a Separation, while the Terms of Con-
 ' formity were so moderate, as by King *Edward VI's*, and
 ' Queen *Elisabeth's* Acts. Others remain'd unsatisfied, and were
 ' always pressing for a further Amendment. — A third
 ' Passage is from Page 20. Among the many Divines, who desi-
 ' red and prayed that the sacred Work of Reformation might go
 ' further, was Mr. *Fox* the Martyrologist, Mr. *Bale*, Mr. *Crowley*,
 ' Mr. *Bulloyn*, Mr. *Giby*, Mr. *Carlisle*, Dr. *Cole*, and others; who
 ' had been Fugitives in Queen *Mary's* Reign. With these agreed
 ' Mr. *Andrew Kingsmill*, Mr. *Francis Mills*, Mr. *Thomas Aldridge*
 ' of *Oxon*, Mr. *Gilpin*, the Northern Apostle, who refused a Bi-
 ' shoprick, Mr. *Horton*, Mr. *Chefson*, Mr. *Whithers*, &c. of *Cam-*
 ' *bridge*.

' These were some of the most eminent Professors, and Stu-
 ' dents in both Universities, were Friends to, and Correspond-
 ' ents with, *Martyr*, *Zanchy*, *Calvin*, *Beza*, *Bullinger*, *Gualtier*,
 ' and other Protestant Divines in *Germany* and *Geneva*.

' A fourth Passage is from P. 25. The Bills relating to this
 ' Reformation, which Sir *Symon Delves* mentions in his Par-
 ' liamentary Collections, occasion'd frequent Speeches in Parlia-
 ' ment; as that by Mr. *Strickland*, a grave and ancient Man of
 ' great Zeal, who press'd a further Reformation, and that a Con-
 ' fession of Faith might be brought in, as had been done by the
 ' Professors of the Gospel in other Nations: He means *Germany*,
 ' *Geneva*, *Switzerland*, *Scotland*, &c. Mr. *Strickland* added,
 ' This had been attempted in Parliament before that Time; but
 ' either the Slackness, or somewhat else of some, was the Let
 ' thereof, or what else, he said, he would not say. By which
 ' he gives us a Hint, That Q. *Elisabeth's* Womanish Love of
 ' Shew, — was the Let of the good Work; and the Pride
 ' and the Vanity of certain Ecclesiasticks confirmed her in that
 ' Affection.

Affection. Mr. *Strickland* was seconded by Mr. *Norton*, a Man wise, bold, and eloquent, as we read in *Sir Symon Delves*: Some Members were for standing to the Directions of the Bishops; but the major Part declared, they would do it no farther than their Consciences should be satisfied. Accordingly, a Committee was appointed to confer with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sir *Robert Lane*, Mr. *Henry Knowls senior*, Mr. *Ashley*, Sir *Henry Gate*, Mr. *Sands*, Mr. *Wentworth*. The latter reported to the House what pass'd in the Conference, particularly, that the Archbishop said, *They should refer themselves to the Bishops*; and he reply'd, *No, by the Faith I bear to God, we'll pass nothing before we understand what it is; for that were to make you Popes. Make you Popes who list, for we will make you none.*

The last Passage I shall give you, is from Pages 31, 32. Why did not he [*Eachard*] tell us of the Lord Keeper Bacon, The Lord Treasurer *Burleigh*, the Earl of *Essex*, Father and Son, the Earl of *Boufford*, the Earl of *Warwick*, the Earl of *Leicester*, the Earl of *Huntington*, the Lord *Gray*, the Lord *Howard*, the Lord *Russel*, Sir *Henry Sidney*, the famous Sir *Philip Sidney*, Sir *Francis Knolls*, Sir *Walter Mildmay*, Sir *Amias Parwel*, Sir *Francis Walsingham*, Sir *Henry Telverton*, Sir *Edwyn Sandys*, Mr. *Beal*, Mr. *Winwood*, and several leading Members of the House of Commons, who were either Puritans themselves, or Patrons of Puritanism; which flourished at this Time, not only in Court and City, but in both Universities, as has been observ'd elsewhere. And it could not well be otherwise, when such great Men as Dr. *Humphrey* and Dr. *Fulk* were in the Chair.

These Passages are added, merely for the sake of the ordinary Reader.

This, and much more to the same Purpose, is declar'd by the remarkable Author of the *Critical History*: And seeing he owns himself a Member of the Church of *England*, his Testimony cannot miss to have the greater Weight with all those of her Communion.

By the short View that has been given, of the Sentiments of the Bishops, Doctors, and Divines of the Episcopal Communion, I perswade my self the Unprejudiced will be satisfied, That *Presbytery* is no Novelty, and that its Adherents are in no Danger of being much straitned in the Defence of their Principles, and Scheme of Government, while they are favoured by so great a Cloud of true Protestants, and reformed Worthies.

And, after all, I cannot but say, That were the zealous Reformers capable to lift up their Head, and take a Review of their *Jure Divino* Successors in England, and their present Adherents in North Britain, they could not miss saying, *They went out from us, but they were not of us* : For, if they had been of us, they would, no Doubt, have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest.

N. B. If any of the Quotations in this Collection be narrated in the Body of the Book, it is owing to an Escape of Memory : For, the *Appendix* was lent out, and not returned, till the rest of the Manuscript was gone to the Press. Besides, the Reader is hereby acquainted, That the Introduction to the Book, which was designed at first, contained a Confirmation of the several Branches of *Chillingworth's* Testimony, that is to be seen in the Close of the *Introduction* now prefix'd; but because it came to swell unto too great a Bulk, it was laid aside, before ever there was a Design of printing the Book.

F I N I S.



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